JUNJI ITO

STORY COLLECTION

DESIRE

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DESERTER

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バイオハウス

BIO HOUSE

AAH, I WANT BLOOD... HIS BLOOD... THAT UNPARALLELED FLAVOR, THAT FRAGRANCE... I HAVE TO HAVE IT.

TONIGHT...

VRRRRR—

MY, WHAT A LOVELY COUNTRY HOUSE.

SLAM

KNOCK

THANK YOU.

YOU MUST BE TIRED AFTER THE LONG TRIP, KUBOTA. COME INSIDE.

THE MUSIC IS WONDERFUL.

THIS IS ALL TO WELCOME YOU.

MY SERVANTS. THEY KEEP AN EYE ON THE HOUSE.

AND WHO ARE THEY?

THEN WE'LL EAT.

GO UP TO YOUR ROOM AND REST A BIT.

RIGHT AWAY, SIR.

GET DINNER READY, WOULD YOU?

HOW'S IT GOING?

ARE YOU USED TO THE WORK NOW?

YES, FOR THE MOST PART.

BUT WHAT REALLY DELIGHTS ME IS THAT YOU AND I SHARE A HOBBY.

AND YOU'RE QUITE THE CAPABLE ASSISTANT. THE COMPANY CAN ONLY GET BIGGER AND BETTER.

WELL, OUR BIOTECHNOLOGY IS VERY PROMISING, YOU KNOW.

CAN'T BELIEVE A GIRL AS BEAUTIFUL AS YOU IS INTO REPULSIVE FARE.

BUT I DO HAVE A PENCHANT FOR DINING ON THE UNUSUAL.

I DON'T KNOW IF YOU'D CALL IT A HOBBY, SIR.

NEVER JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER.

MM-HMM.

THEY EVEN HAVE PARASITES SOMETIMES.

GIVE 'EM A GO.

THESE LIVE CAMEL CRICKETS RIGHT HERE, NOT TOO MANY CAN CHOW DOWN ON THEM.

MOST OF MY FRIENDS PREFER TO EAT THEIR INSECTS LIVE.

L-live?

HA HA HA HA

EVEN AT MY AGE, I'M SO FULL OF LIFE, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH MYSELF.

I-I SUPPOSE YOUR VITALITY COMES IN LARGE PART FROM THIS SORT OF MEAL.

EXACTLY.

N-NO, IT WAS VERY DELICIOUS.

SO YOU DON'T LIKE 'EM ALIVE? BUT THE FRIED LIZARD ALONE'S NOT GOING TO BE ENOUGH.

JUST HANG ON A MINUTE.

AH, YES! I'VE GOT SOMETHING SPECIAL TO FINISH OFF.

I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.

°°°O HE'S GOT ME BEAT.

PTAN

WHAT KIND OF BLOOD?

TAKE A SIP.

BLOOD.

HERE WE ARE!

GEH!

!

I DO LIKE SNAKE BLOOD.

I WANT TO VOMIT, IT'S SO GROSS. WHAT IS IT?

NO... I'M SORRY.

YOU DON'T LIKE IT, THEN.

SIR... WHAT IS THIS?

I SEE... THAT'S TOO BAD. IT'S MY BLOOD.

YOU'LL DRINK IT, WON'T YOU?

IT'S MY BLOOD. FRESH FROM MY VEINS.

WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY?

I MIGHT ENJOY UNUSUAL CUISINE, BUT YOUR BLOOD...

THIS IS A JOKE, RIGHT?

BUT YOU WON'T DRINK MINE?!

SIR!

YOU'LL DRINK A SNAKE'S BLOOD.

ARE YOU SAYING YOU WON'T?!

YOU *WILL* DRINK!

NO!

NOW, DRINK!

GRAB

I WON'T!

YOU DARE DEFY ME?!

Y—

FWP FWP

DO YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENS TO PEOPLE WHO DEFY ME?!

SIR
!!

SPLAT

A BEAUTY LIKE YOU DRINKING MY BLOOD, *THAT* MAKES IT ALL WORTH IT!

DRINK!

AAH!

COME NOW!

HELP!

SOME-
ONE,
HELP!

STOP!

FOOL. IT WON'T OPEN.

BAM BAM

THERE'S THAT BLOOD.

MASTER! GIVE US BLOOD!

YOU CATCH HER AND YOU CAN DRINK YOUR FILL!

GET THAT GIRL!

FOOLS!

EEE!

LAP LAP

SHE SHOULDN'T GET TO HAVE IT ALL TO HERSELF.

LOOK HOW MUCH THERE IS HERE!

WAIT JUST A SECOND.

NO, I DID!

I GOT HER!

W-WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!

SLAM

AND IF IT'S NOT A DREAM, IT'S A HIDDEN CAMERA THING.

IT'S JUST A DREAM... A BAD DREAM.

HUH HUH

KUBOTA! YOU COME OUT RIGHT NOW!

WHAT A HORRIFIC MAN...

HE HAS ALL THESE CREATURES FOR DINNER.

THERE'S BLOODY-MINDED, AND THEN THERE'S THIS.

MAYBE HE OVERATE?

EEEEAAAAH

BAM

THERE YOU ARE!

AZAT
OOH!
?!
YOU'RE THE ONLY MUTANT CAMEL CRICKET LEFT IN THIS WORLD AFTER AN ACCIDENT IN THE MIDDLE OF A GENE-SWITCHING EXPERIMENT... HOW TASTY YOU MUST BE.
WHEN DID YOU GET OUT OF YOUR CAGE?
WILL YOU GET EVEN BIGGER IF I FEED YOU MY ASSISTANT?
I TAKE MY EYES OFF YOU FOR A SECOND AND YOU GET SO BIG.

KWAM

KUBOT—

KZZT

THUD

HUH HUH

SPROING

AAH!

NO!

I JUST CAN'T...

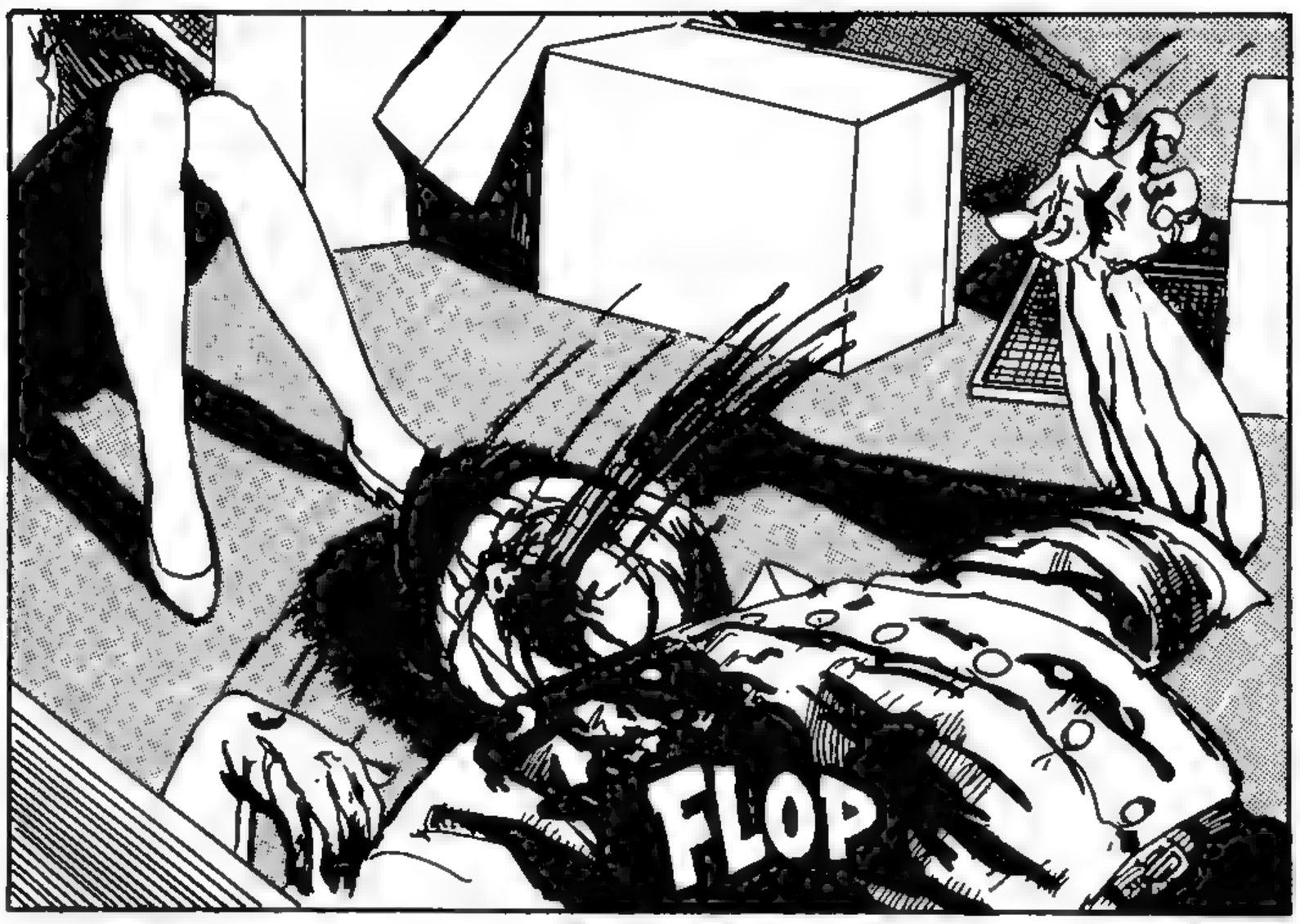
THIS THING!

MWAH HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA!

THD

THD THD

AAAAH!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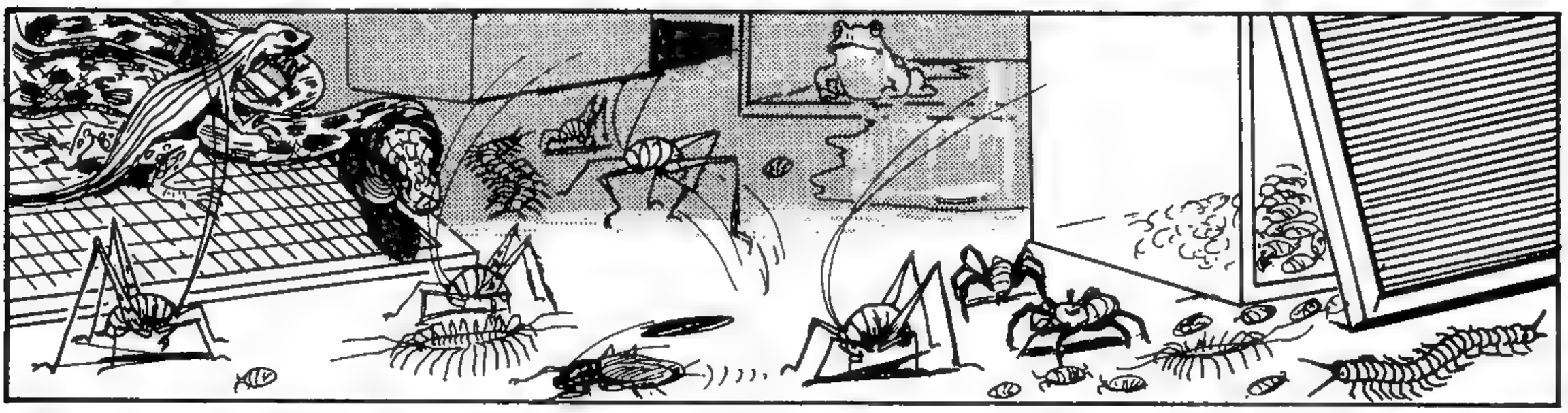
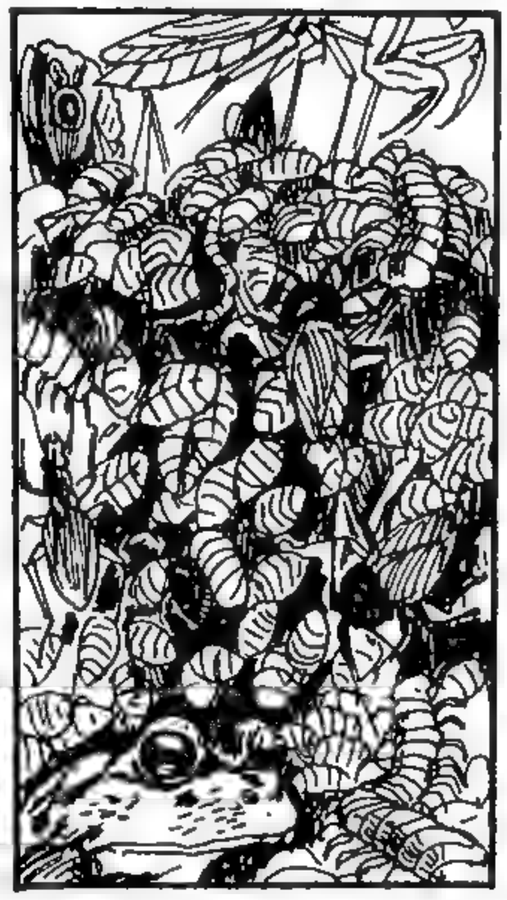
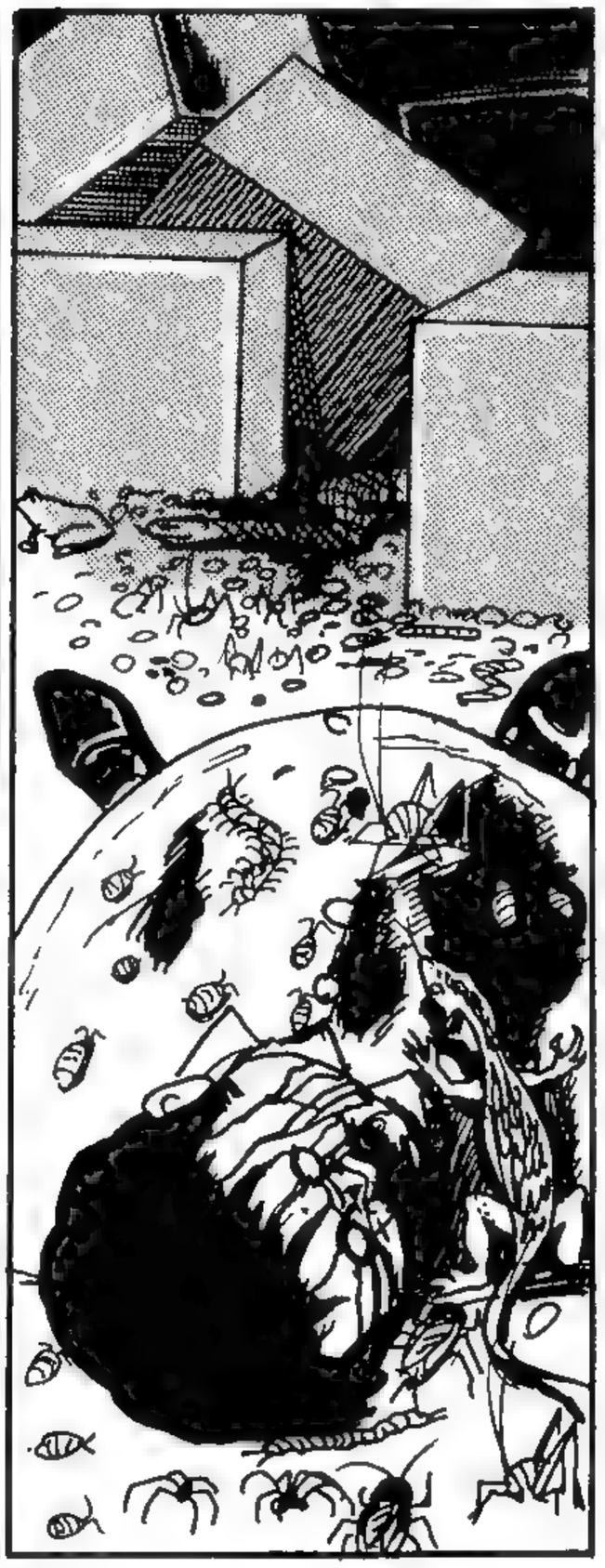






HOW IRONIC.

THERE'S PLENTY FOR YOU THERE.

GO ON UPSTAIRS.

顔泥棒

FACE THIEF

WHEN I FIRST SAW THEM AFTER I TRANSFERRED HERE...

YUMI MACHIDA

...I THOUGHT THEY WERE TWINS.

HMPH, UP AT THE FRONT. EASIER TO KEEP AN EYE ON ME HERE?

MACHIDA, YOU SIT HERE.

PLEASE LET ME SIT NEXT TO MACHIDA!

W-WHAT IS IT, KAMEI?

SIR!

Hm?

AH!

PLEASE!

SIR!

B-BUT—

SWITCH SEATS WITH KAMEI.

YAMADA.

'KAY.

FINE, ENOUGH!

FINE!

HI!

What's *with* her?

HEY!

WELL, WE'RE FRIENDS AND ALL.

WHY D'YOU GOTTA COME, TOO?

YOU'RE GOING TO THE RESTROOM, RIGHT? WE CAN GO TOGETHER.

WHY ARE YOU FOLLOWING ME?!

SINCE WHEN HAVE WE BEEN FRIENDS?

FRIENDS ?

YOU DON'T KNOW THE FIRST THING ABOUT ME.

ARE YOU STUPID?

I GOT KICKED OUTTA MY OLD SCHOOL 'CAUSE I DID WHATEVER THE HELL I WANTED.

YOU'RE NOWHERE NEAR MY LEAGUE.

I'M GONNA BE QUEEN BEE HERE, TOO.

MACHIDA... YOU'RE SO PRETTY.

SO DEAL WITH IT!

...

WHAT ?!

WHAT IS SHE EVEN THINKING?

WHAT A WEIRDO...

PLEASE! LET ME COME WITH YOU! I'LL BE YOUR SERVANT!

I HATE GIRLS LIKE YOU.

NO THANKS.

TCH!

GO AWAY!

I DON'T CARE ABOUT THAT SHIT!

GET AWAY FROM ME!

SHOPLIFT, CHEAT, ANYTHING!

I'LL DO ANY-THING!

YOU WANNA SHOPLIFT, DO IT BY YOURSELF.

SHE'S SUPER ANNOYING.

CAN YOU DO SOME-THING ABOUT HER?

HEY, YOU'RE HER SISTER, YEAH?

WHAT ?!

SHE'S NOT MY SISTER.

YOU CAN'T LET HER OUT OF THE HOUSE LIKE THIS.

WE'RE NOT RELATED AT ALL.

I'M NOT LYING! RIGHT?

LIAR! SHE LOOKS JUST LIKE YOU!

SHE'S NOT LYING.

YEAH, WELL...

YOU WANNA BE AROUND ME THAT BAD?

YES!

FINE.

OKAY!

THEN FOLLOW ME!

SO I'LL TEACH YOU HOW SCARY IT IS.

YOU HAVE NO CLUE HOW THE WORLD WORKS.

SEE ?!

WHUD

HOW D'YOU LIKE THAT?!

EEE! THAT HURTS!

AND—

GO BACK TO YOUR OLD SEAT TOMORROW!

THIS IS YOUR FIRST AND LAST LESSON!

WHAT THE HELL?!

STOP IT. YOU'RE NO MATCH FOR HER.

HEH HEH HEH!

HEY, KAMEI! YOU SHOULD QUIT IT, TOO!

WHAT ?!

VROOM!

THANKS FOR SAVING ME, HIBINO.

HEE HEE HEE!

AAAH, SHE'S FINALLY GONE.

THANKS TO YOU... NICE WORK.

BECAUSE SHE WANTS SOMETHING.

OH YEAH?

SHE'S THE ONE GLUED TO ME.

STAY AS FAR AWAY AS YOU CAN.

YOU SHOULDN'T GET TOO CLOSE TO HER.

LIKE HOW? KIDNAP ME?

STEAL ME?!

THE THING IS, SHE'S TRYING TO STEAL YOU.

SHE'S NOT NORMAL.

NO... NOT LIKE THAT.

HUH HUH

MEANING?

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU CAN SAY THAT WITH A STRAIGHT FACE. HILARIOUS!

AS IF A PERSON LIKE THAT COULD EXIST!

HA HA HA HA

I MEAN, YOU'RE NOT NORMAL.

YOU'RE NOT DOING TOO BADLY YOURSELF HERE.

Don't under-estimate me, boy.

HAVEN'T LEARNED YOUR LESSON YET?

YOU TWIT... YOU STILL HERE?

TAIYO INSURANCE
BAR YORO
URBAN
ASAHI PARK
32-66
HEY...
...WHERE ARE WE GOING?
WE'RE ON THE BUS, BUT...
VRRRRR
ASAHI PARK
9040
32-66

HER PHYSICAL MAKEUP IS DIFFERENT!

SHE'S NOT NORMAL.

...HER FACE TURNS INTO THEIRS!

WHEN SHE SPENDS A LOT OF TIME WITH ONE PERSON...

AND THEN SHE STAYS GLUED TO YOU UNTIL SHE GETS TIRED OF YOUR FACE.

SHE GOES AFTER THE BEAUTY SHE WANTS FOR HERSELF.

SINCE THEN, SHE'S GOTTEN CLOSE TO EVERY BEAUTIFUL GIRL AT SCHOOL AND STOLEN THEIR LOOKS.

SHE'S CHANGED HER LOOKS I DON'T KNOW HOW MANY TIMES.

WHEN I FIRST SAW HER, SHE LOOKED JUST LIKE THE POP SINGER SEIKO MATSUDA. I GUESS SHE ONLY NEEDS A PICTURE.

HEY, WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

HEY, WHO'S THAT BEHIND YOU?

YUMI. BEEN A WHILE... WHY'D YOU WANNA SEE US TODAY?

IT'S ME!

HER? OH, SO SHE...

Y-YUMI? WHICH ONE'S YUMI?!

I-IT'S OBVIOUSLY—

IT'S OBVIOUSLY ME!

I'LL EXPLAIN!

AFTER SHE TRANSFERRED HERE, I GUESS SHE TOOK A LIKING TO MY FACE AND BEGGED HER DAD FOR SURGERY!

THE TRUTH IS, HER DAD'S A PLASTIC SURGEON.

WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON?!

THIS ONE'S AN IMPOSTOR!

THAT'S ALL A LIE!

WHAT AN ASSHOLE, RIGHT?

I'LL TAKE IT SLOW AND MAKE YOU UNDER-STAND.

YOU DON'T KNOW WHEN TO GIVE UP!

W-WOW. PLASTIC SURGERY THESE DAYS IS AMAZING... YOU LOOK JUST LIKE HER.

WHAT'S A LIE?! YOU GOT SOME NERVE COPYING MY FACE!

IDIOT! WHAT ARE YOU ON ABOUT?!

SHUT YOUR DAMNED MOUTH!

COME ON! WALK!

THAT'S ...

What is *wrong* with you?

AH!

HEY! WHAT HAPPENED ?!

WHICH ONE'S KAMEI?!

IT'S YOU, ISN'T IT?

HOW ABOUT THIS TIME, HIBINO?

WHAT ARE YOU *DOING*?

HIBINO ...

I'M BECOMING BEAUTIFUL FOR YOU.

HEY? I'M DOING THIS FOR YOUR SAKE.

GODDAMMIT ...

YOU OKAY?

DON'T IGNORE ME, HIBINO!

YOU'RE BLEED-ING.

YOU STILL DON'T HAVE THE TIME OF DAY FOR ME?

I DON'T WANT ANY STOLEN BEAUTY.

GO AWAY!

I CAN'T GO BACK TO MY REAL APPEARANCE.

I CAN'T.

COME TO ME WEARING YOUR OWN FACE.

OR ARE YOU TELLING ME TO GO LOCK MYSELF IN PRISON?

I MEAN, I COULD. BUT I'D HAVE TO CUT OFF ALL CONTACT WITH PEOPLE. SO THERE'S NO WAY.

SO IF I HAVE TO BE, I MIGHT AS WELL BE INFLUENCED BY BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE LIKE HER.

OVER THE COURSE OF A DAY, I'M INEVITABLY INFLUENCED BY OTHER PEOPLE.

PEOPLE LIKE YOU...

...COULD NEVER UNDERSTAND HOW I FEEL.

CRAP! I'M LATE AGAIN!

THE SPEED OF THE TRANSFORMATION'S SUPER FAST LATELY, THOUGH.

IF I DON'T GET TO HER SOON, MY FACE'LL GO BACK TO THE WAY IT WAS. IT'S UNSTABLE RIGHT AFTER THE TRANSFORMATION.

I BEAT THAT DELINQUENT DOWN YESTERDAY, SO SHE SHOULD BE A LITTLE MORE OBEDIENT NOW.

2A HAYASHI

EXHIB

DENTAL CLEANING AWARENESS

GOOD MORNING!

KLATTER

MM!

OHH, KAMEI? HURRY AND TAKE YOUR SEAT.

SIR!

S—

W-WHAT ARE YOU...!

DAMMIT!

WHAT'S WRONG, KAMEI? COME ON.

WORKED LIKE A CHARM!

2A HAYASHI

A HA HA HA HA HA

THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU UNDERESTIMATE ME!

EVEN *YOU* WON'T GO NEAR FACES LIKE THAT, I BET!

NO POINT IN GOING TO ANOTHER CLASS, Y'KNOW!

SUCK IT!

SHE'S COMING.

HIBINO, YOU'RE NOT WEARING A MASK?

2E UMEMURA

THIS IS GOING TO LEAD TO TROUBLE.

DRIVING A STUDENT INTO A CORNER LIKE THIS...

WHY IS EVEN OUR TEACHER WEARING A MASK?!

WHAT?

...SHE'S NOT ACTUALLY A STUDENT.

OH, ABOUT THAT...

AND YOU'VE SEEN WHAT SHE'S LIKE. SHE'S AN ENCYCLOPEDIA OF EVIL, SO WE NEVER MANAGED TO GET RID OF HER.

I'M SURE NONE OF YOU KNEW THIS, BUT... SHE SETTLED INTO THIS SCHOOL WITHOUT PERMISSION A LONG, LONG TIME AGO.

WE HAVE NO IDEA WHO SHE REALLY IS. SHE HAS TO BE A LOT OLDER THAN YOU ALL.

SO IF IT WORKS, IT WOULD ACTUALLY SOLVE EVERYTHING.

THEN YESTERDAY A STUDENT CAME TO HER TEACHER WITH THIS IDEA, AND WE DECIDED TO GIVE IT A GO.

THE PRINCIPAL'S BEEN AT WITS' END.

OH! SHE'S RUNNING ACROSS THE FIELD.

GET HER!

ALL RIGHT!

OH! THERE'S KAMEI!

AAAAHooo

WAIT UP!

NOOO-OOOO!

THIS JOKE'S GONE TOO FAR!

I HAVE TO STOP THEM!

WHAT ARE THEY DOING TO HER?!

IT'S TOO SUDDEN!

IT CAN'T ...!

H- HIBINO ...

POP PWUK

PLORK

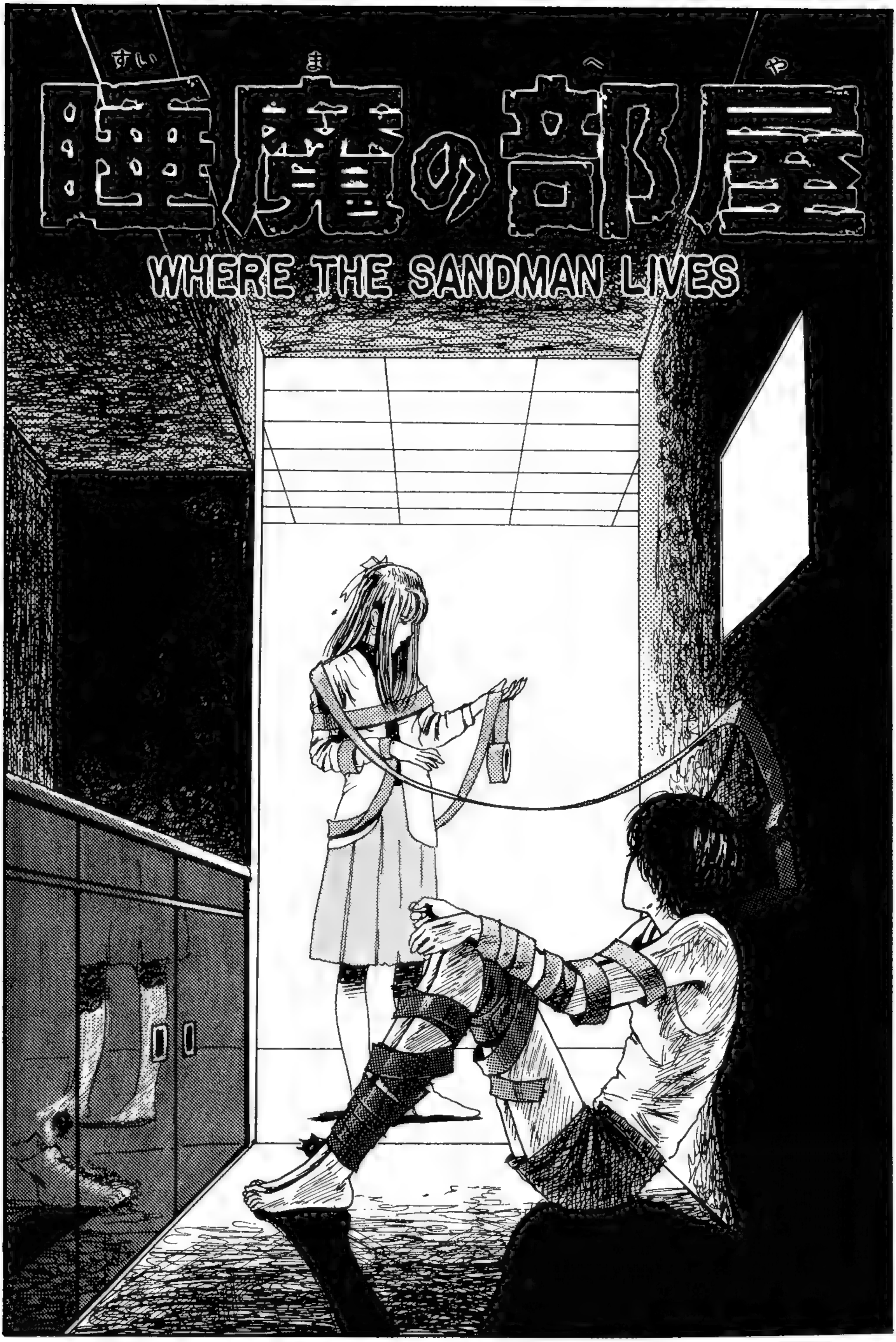
G-GIVE ME A MIRROR!

HIBINO!

W-WHAT THE...

魔界の砦

WHERE THE SANDMAN LIVES



THREE DAYS!

I HAVEN'T SLEPT IN THREE DAYS.

WHAT'S WRONG, YUJI? YOU LOOK TERRIBLE.

Bonnard

NO, IT'S NOT THAT.

WHY NOT? ARE YOU WRITING A NEW NOVEL?

YUJI.

YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE I CAN TALK TO. I NEED YOUR HELP.

MARI...

THE OTHER ME THAT LIVES IN MY DREAM-WORLD IS TRYING TO COME OUT INTO THE REAL WORLD.

I KNOW *YOU'LL* BELIEVE ME. THE TRUTH IS, OKAY...

WHAT ON EARTH IS IT?

SO NOW I CAN'T SLEEP ANYMORE.

HE STARTED MAKING HIS MOVE THREE DAYS AGO.

HE'S AWAKE WHILE I'M ASLEEP. HE WANTS TO DRAG ME INTO THE DREAM AND BECOME THE REAL ME.

IT'S YOUR IMAGINATION AGAIN.

IT IS NOT!

HANG ON A MINUTE.

WHEN I SLEEP, HE WAKES UP.

IT'S DEFINITELY NOT IN MY HEAD.

YOU HAVE TO BELIEVE ME!

BUT I MEAN, ANOTHER SELF IN YOUR DREAM?

THAT SOUNDS EXACTLY LIKE THE KIND OF THING YOU'RE GOOD AT WRITING.

OF COURSE. A DOCTOR.

A DOCTOR?

MAYBE YOU SHOULD SEE A DOCTOR?

YUJI...

YUJI!

THANKS, MARI!

A DOCTOR MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP ME.

YUJI!

STOP, YUJI! YOU CAN'T! I WAS JOKING.

LISTEN TO ME!

WORST CASE, I END UP AT A SHRINK. THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT, RIGHT?

I CAN'T IMAGINE THAT A SURGEON OR AN INTERNIST COULD FIX THIS.

I KNOW, MARI...

BUT A SHRINK CAN'T DO ANYTHING FOR ME.

WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO?

YUJI... TO BE HONEST, I DON'T REALLY GET IT.

Borbo

AND I'LL BE UNDER *HIS* CONTROL BY THEN, ANYWAY.

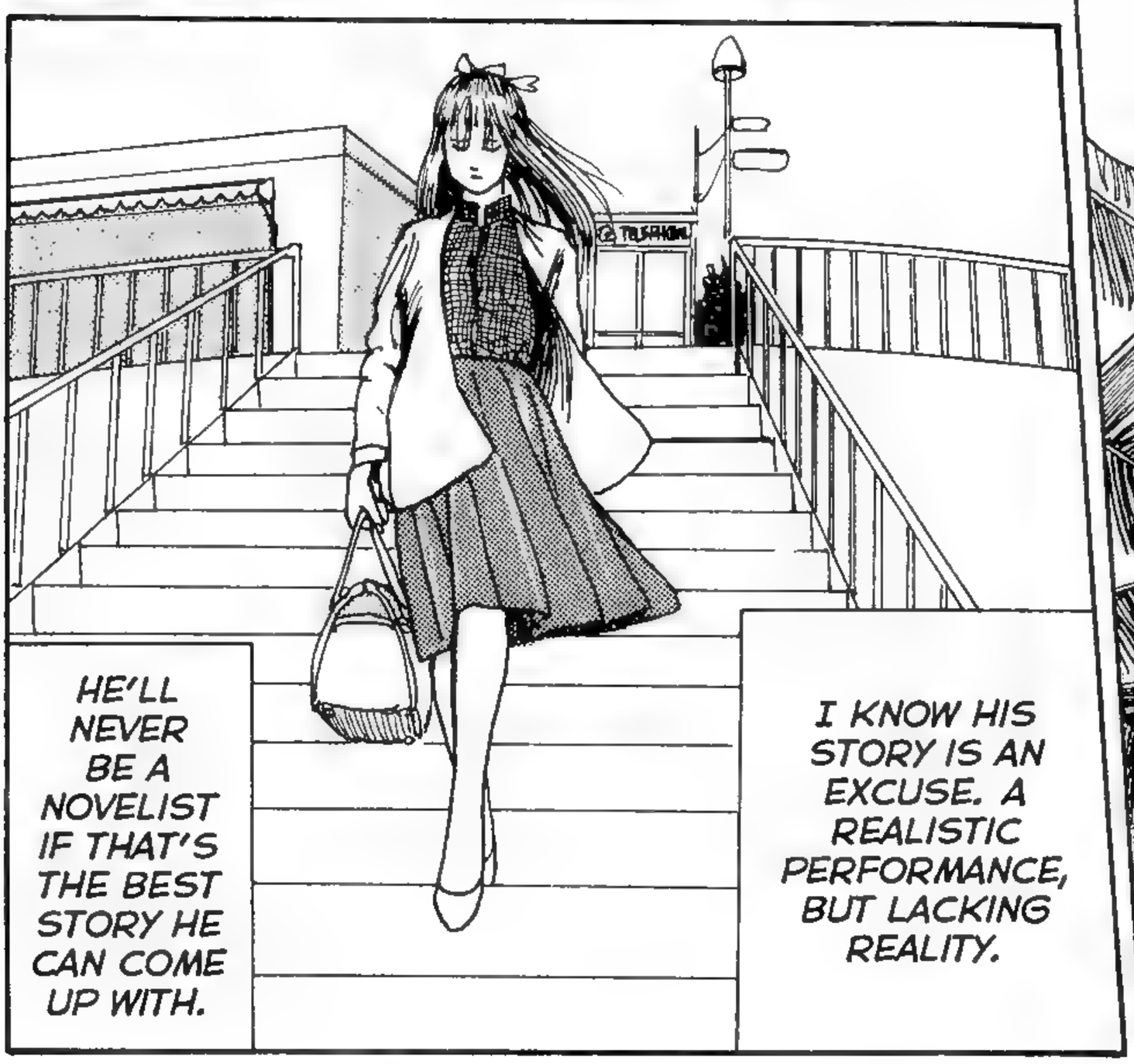
YUJI...

...

MARI. I WANT YOU TO WATCH ME SO THAT I DON'T FALL ASLEEP.

TELEPHONE

SO I TOLD MY PARENTS I'M GOING ON A TRIP WITH YOU. BACK ME UP, OKAY?
...YEAH, IT'S NOT GREAT. OKAY, KEIKO, THANKS.


HE'LL NEVER BE A NOVELIST IF THAT'S THE BEST STORY HE CAN COME UP WITH.
I KNOW HIS STORY IS AN EXCUSE. A REALISTIC PERFORMANCE, BUT LACKING REALITY.

I WONDER IF THERE'LL BE A FULL MOON TONIGHT.

THE CASTLE OF THE CURSED MAN OF LETTERS...

204

OZAKI

KNOCK KNOCK

THANKS, MARI. COME IN.

YUJI.

HEY.

I'LL MAKE SOME COFFEE.

KLK

I'VE ALREADY HAD PLENTY.

THEN JUST MAKE SOME FOR YOURSELF.

OH. I CAN MAKE IT.

SO WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON WITH *HIM*?

HE'S ASLEEP. BUT I'M COMING UP ON MY LIMIT.

ROLL ROLL

TO STOP HIM FROM SHOWING UP. HURRY.

WHY?

MARI, TAPE MY WRISTS AND ANKLES TOGETHER.

IS THAT GOOD?

YEAH.

I'M HERE NOW. IT'S OKAY. RELAX. GET SOME REST.

I DON'T KNOW IF IT'LL WORK, THOUGH.

...WHAT ON EARTH HAPPENED TO YOU?

YUJI...

SNIP

SNIP

HE HAS THESE WEIRD DREAMS BECAUSE HE KEEPS READING BOOKS LIKE THIS.

SCI-FI SECRETS

DRACULA

THE COMPLETE LOVECRAFT

THE COMPLETE LOVECRAFT

TIC

TIC

TIC

TIC

SIRK
SIRK
SIRK
SIRK
TIC
TIC
TIC
TIC
TIC
12
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
清水宏童話集
井上九
SIRK
SIRK
?
清水宏童話集①
井上九
宇宙船
大百科
吸
69
ヒ
晴い日曜日
SIRK
SIRK
SIRK
SIRK
AH!

YUJI!

AAAH!

WAKE UP!

GRAB

WHAM

HRNGH!

KZAP

GULP

MARI! HELP ME!

HAAH! HAAH!

YOU TOOK THE TAPE OFF?

AAAH.

YUJI... WHAT *WAS* THAT?

HIS TRUE FORM IS THE REVERSE SIDE OF MY BODY.

THE DREAM-WORLD ME.

IT IS, THOUGH. YOU JUST SAW IT YOURSELF!

BUT THAT'S JUST... THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE.

HE'S BEEN DREAMING INSIDE OF ME.

BUT NOW HE KNOWS ABOUT THE OUTSIDE.

BUT...

EXACTLY. LIKE A REVERSIBLE SWEATER.

THAT'S WHAT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE.

SO THEN, YOU'LL BE COMPLETELY TURNED INSIDE OUT?

I'VE BEEN EMPTY SINCE I WAS BORN.

THE THING ABOUT THAT IS...I CAN ONLY EXPLAIN IT LIKE THIS...

YOUR GUTS WOULD COME OUT TOO.

BODIES AREN'T EMPTY CAVES.

JUST STOP!

WHICH WOULD BE WHY I'VE NEVER HAD ANY INTERNAL TROUBLE.

OR MAYBE SINCE I LOST MY FAMILY.

EVER SINCE I WAS LITTLE, I'VE WANTED TO FLY LIKE A BIRD. I TRIED ALL KINDS OF THINGS. ATTACHING WINGS TO MY ARMS. BUT NOTHING WORKED, Y'KNOW? SO I WANTED TO AT LEAST FLY IN MY DREAMS.

MY DREAMS ARE STRANGELY REAL.

YUJI, YOU CAN'T FALL ASLEEP!

YOU NEVER TOLD ME THAT BEFORE.

MY DREAMS ARE WAY MORE REALISTIC THAN REALITY.

"YOU CAN'T FLY, OBVIOUSLY," THEY SAID.

BUT WHEN THE DREAM CAME ALONG... EVERYONE LAUGHED AT ME.

GOING ON FOUR DAYS NOW.

I FEEL A LOT CALMER NOW WITH YOU HERE, MARI.

...

I WONDER WHY HE'S TRYING TO GET OUT.

DREAMS ARE WHERE ANYTHING'S POSSIBLE...

I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH TIME HAS PASSED SINCE THEN. WE'VE BEEN DESPERATELY FIGHTING HIS DREAM.

THE TAPE DIDN'T WORK, AND WHEN WE BLOCKED OFF HIS MOUTH, HE WRENCHED IT OPEN. THE LAST THING WE COULD THINK OF WAS SIMPLY TO NOT SLEEP.

ENOUGH...

MARI...

HEY? MAYBE WE COULD TAKE TURNS NAPPING?

HE PROBABLY WON'T COME OUT RIGHT AWAY.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I'M FINE!

I'LL GO INTO THE DREAM. I CAN'T PUT YOU THROUGH ANY MORE OF THIS.

AND I MEAN, SO DO I.

THAT'S WHY I'VE RESISTED SO FAR...

MARI... DO YOU WANT TO KNOW WHY HE'S SO OBSESSED WITH GETTING OUT?

HE WANTS YOU.

HIS OBJECTIVE IS YOU.

YUJI!

YUJI!

YUJI!

YOU CAN'T GO TO SLEEP!

I DON'T WANT THAT.

RRRRP

I WILL PULL YOU OUT OF THE DREAM!

SWUNK

FWP
FWP
FWP
FWP
FWP
EEAAAH!
PLISH
TWANG
TWANG
BANG
THUD

KRSH KRSH

KRSH KRSH

IT'S OKAY. I'LL COME, TOO.

YUJI...

HE LIVES BY HIMSELF. I GUESS HE DOESN'T HAVE ANY FAMILY.

THIS IS IT.

OH? IT'S NOT LOCKED.

COME IN.

WE'VE COME FROM THE STATION TO ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS.

MR. HIRANO, ARE YOU IN THERE?

DO YOU MIND IF I TAKE A LOOK INSIDE?

MR. HIRANO, WHAT'S THIS OVERNIGHT BAG?

WE'D APPRECIATE YOUR HELP.

YOU'RE A FRIEND OF MARI IGARASHI, YES? IT SEEMS SHE'S GONE MISSING.

WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?!

W- WHAT ?!

SHE'S PART OF MY VISCERA NOW.

IT'S POINTLESS TO LOOK FOR HER.

YOU DIDN'T... YOU DIDN'T EAT HER, DID YOU?!

SHE'S... GONE ON A TRIP IN MY DREAM-WORLD.

NO...

MORIMOTO !!

STAY BACK!

悪魔の理論

あくまのりろん

THE DEVIL'S LOGIC

THAT'S KAZUMI MORIMOTO FROM CLASS D.

WHOA. FOR REAL?

WHY IS SHE—?!

SHE WAS GRINNING HER HEAD OFF WHEN I SAW HER AN HOUR AGO!

WHAT'S GOING ON?!

WHAT? MORIMOTO ?!

AAAH!

OH! MS. YOKOI'S TRYING TO TALK HER DOWN.

THUD

KLAK

KLAK

HE DID, OKAMORI, AFTER I JUST WENT AND ASKED HIM OUT YESTERDAY!

AN HOUR AGO, MY CLASSMATE KAZUMI MORIMOTO WAS WALKING ON CLOUDS...

WOW. SO MATSUDA SAID YES?

OOH.

CHAK

IT'S GONNA BE A SUPER SUNDAY FOR ME. LA LA LA!

SO YOU'RE GOING TO SET UP A DATE NOW?

YUP.

...THIS WOULD HAPPEN AN HOUR LATER.

I NEVER DREAMED ...

WHEN SHE WASN'T LOOKING, I SLIPPED A TAPE RECORDER INTO HER BAG.

TO GET THE DEETS ON THEIR SECRET RENDEZVOUS. HEH HEH HEH.

THE RECORDER DIDN'T BREAK IN THE FALL.

...THE ENTIRE MYSTERY WAS RECORDED ON THIS TAPE.

DID MATSUDA DUMP HER?

WHY KILL HER-SELF?

I STARTED LISTENING TO THE TAPE FROM THE BEGINNING.

MAYBE ...

SO ABOUT TOMORROW. I'LL COME PICK YOU UP ON MY MOTORCYCLE. THAT'S COOL, YEAH?

SURE.

NOPE.

HI, MATSUDA! WERE YOU WAITING LONG?

HUH? WEIRD. SHE'S STILL ON TOP OF THE WORLD WITH MATSUDA?

OKAY!

OKAY, SEE YOU TOMORROW AT TEN.

AND THEN AN UNFAMILIAR VOICE CALLED TO HER.

OKAY! I'M GONNA GO GET SOME STUFF TO MAKE LUNCHES FOR TOMORROW!

THANK YOU, GOD!

SO THEN WHY WOULD SHE...

MORIMOTO!

I'M KUMAGAYA FROM CLASS A. DO YOU HAVE A SECOND?

IF IT'S JUST A SECOND. WHAT IS IT?

YOU'RE MORIMOTO, RIGHT?

I AM...

SORRY TO COME AT YOU OUT OF THE BLUE.

BUT DON'T YOU FEEL LIKE DYING?

WHAAAAT ?!

I WAS HOPING YOU WOULD DIE NOW.

STOP RIGHT THERE AND LISTEN. I'M SERIOUS.

LET GO OF ME!

I'M IN A HURRY. I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR JOKES.

IT'S NOT THAT I HATE YOU OR ANYTHING.

IT'S A REVOLUTIONARY THEORY. SOMEONE I TRULY RESPECT TAUGHT IT TO ME.

AFTER HEARING IT, MOST PEOPLE CHOOSE DEATH. IT'S TRULY A REVOLUTION IN THINKING, SOMETHING TO NOTE IN THE HISTORY BOOKS.

SO LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT THE LOGIC OF DEATH.

I SAID, LET GO!

YOU'RE EXACTLY THE MODEL I WAS PICTURING.

WHAT IS GOING ON?! THIS GIRL'S TRYING TO PERSUADE KAZUMI MORIMOTO TO DIE!

I'M SURE YOU'LL CHOOSE DEATH, TOO, MORIMOTO. AND I'M GOING TO FILM IT.

ALL RIGHT?

THE GOD OF DEATH!

SHE TOOK THE NEXT TEN OR 20 MINUTES SPELLING OUT THIS "LOGIC OF DEATH."

SHE WAS TERRIFYINGLY PERSUASIVE, SOMETHING MORE THAN HUMAN.

SHE WASN'T SINGING THE PRAISES OF THE AFTERLIFE AND HOW WONDERFUL IT WAS...

SHE WAS INSTEAD ESPOUSING A PHILOSOPHY THAT COULD ONLY HAVE BEEN CRAFTED BY DEATH ITSELF.

THIS WOMAN HAS TO BE THE GOD OF DEATH!

AND...

KAZUMI MORIMOTO WAS POSSESSED BY DEATH.

...SO WAS I...

I ACCEPTED IT.

IN THE TAPE NOW, KAZUMI MORIMOTO IS WANDERING, SEEKING THE LOCATION OF HER DEATH.

I AM, TOO. RIGHT NOW, WE'RE MOVING PERFECTLY IN SYNC.

I WANTED TO DIE.

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

MORI-MOTO!

AND THEN MS. YOKOI'S VOICE CAME OVER THE TAPE SUDDENLY.

BUT ACTUALLY FACED WITH IT, I HESITATED.

THERE'S NOTHING TO BE SCARED OF. EVERYONE IN THE WORLD WILL BE DEAD SOON.

GO ON AND JUMP.

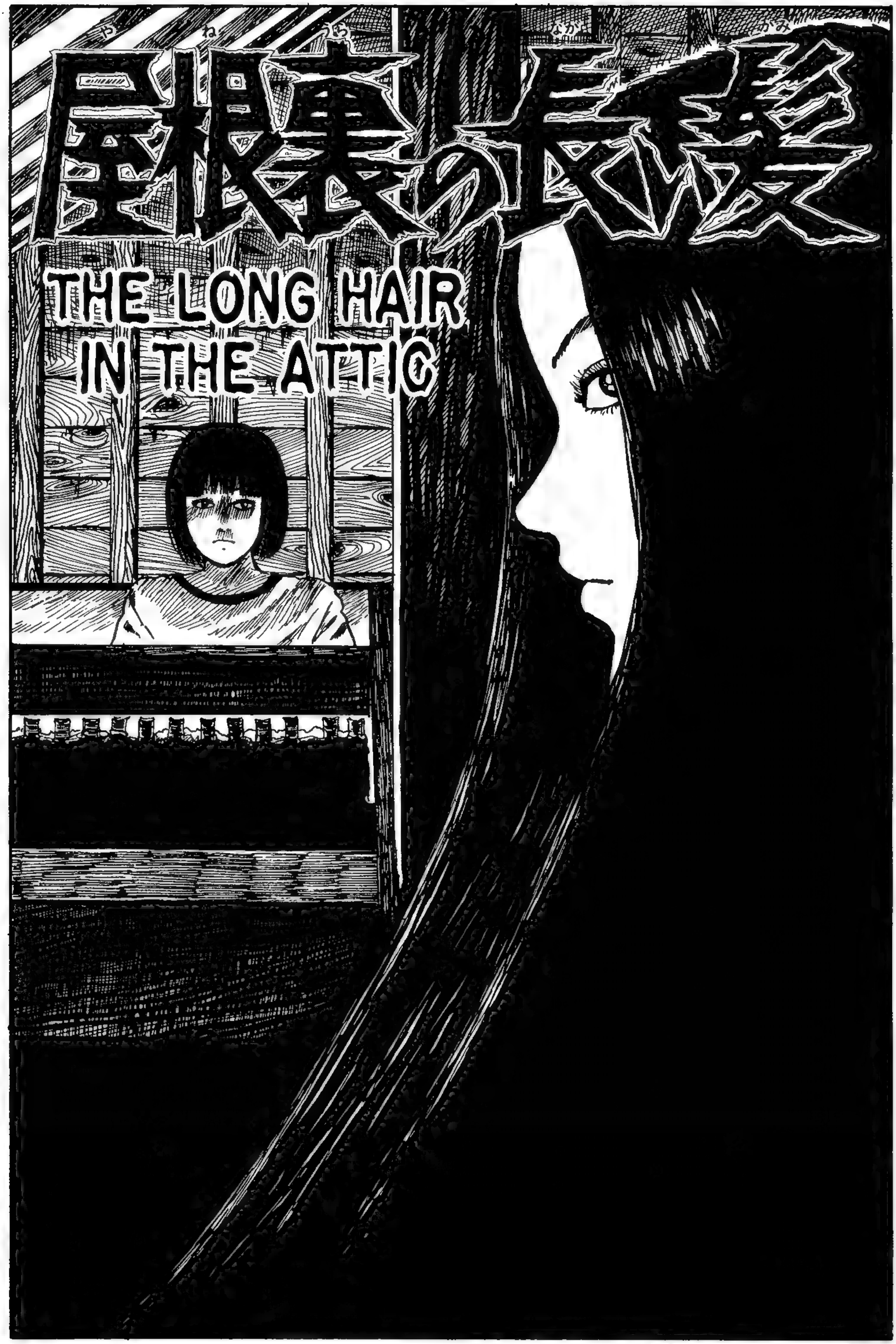
THAT'S RIGHT... I'M DEATH'S ADVOCATE.

I'M HERE TO TELL EVERYONE IN THE WORLD WHY THEY SHOULD DIE!

THE DEVIL'S LOGIC/END

屋根裏の長髪

THE LONG HAIR IN THE ATTIC



SKREE

...TRY SO HARD TO PLEASE ME. HAIR, LIPSTICK, CLOTHES, PERFUME...

YOU ALWAYS...

DON'T CALL ME ANYMORE, OKAY?

WE'RE JUST NO GOOD TOGETHER.

IT'S BEST IF WE DON'T SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN.

A GIRL LIKE YOU'S BETTER OFF WITH SOMEONE SERIOUS, CHIEMI.

IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT.

BUT YOU'RE SO CLINGY. IT'S TOO MUCH.

AND SURE, THAT DOES MAKE A GUY HAPPY.

I NEED A GIRL WHO KNOWS HOW TO HAVE FUN IS ALL.

GOODBYE.

I'M A PLAYBOY, YOU KNOW?

WALK

I'M HOME...

HI, ERI.

OH! HI, CHIEMI.

ABOVE YOUR ROOM.

THERE'S A RAT.

ZAP

?

OH, REALLY...

KLIK

TK TK

AH!

GOODBYE...
HUH?

TK TK TK TK TK TK TK TK TK TK

AH!

TK TK TK TK TK TK TK TK TK

BAM

YOU LITTLE—!

TK TK

THERE YOU ARE!

BAM

PAY RENT THEN!

TK TK TK TK TK TK TK TK TK TK TK TK

BAM

THERE!

O

HE SET TRAPS ALREADY. BUT RATS ARE SMART THESE DAYS.

WE NEED AN EXTERMINATOR. TELL DAD.

YEAH...

YOU HEARD IT, DIDN'T YOU?

YEAH.

ERI, IS YOUR SISTER HOME YET?

YEAH. SHE'S UPSTAIRS. SHE SEEMS BUMMED.

CHIEMI.

WHAT?

NO ONE EVER BROUGHT ME BEFORE.

I'LL KEEP BRINGING YOU OUT HERE.

IS THIS YOUR FIRST TIME SEEING THE OCEAN, CHIEMI?

THAT'S SURPRISING.

YES.

GROW MY HAIR?

YOU SHOULD... GROW YOUR HAIR OUT.

WHAT A SELFISH MAN...

...

GROW IT OUT! I'M SURE YOU'D LOOK GREAT.

YOU LIKE LONG HAIR, HUH?

YEAH. DOWN TO ABOUT HERE.

SOB...
SOB...

MAYBE SHE HAD A FIGHT WITH HER BOYFRIEND.

SOB...
SOB...

HM?

SHE'S UP PRETTY EARLY.

THE LIGHT IN CHIEMI'S ROOM IS ON.

ALL RIGHT, HON. I'M OFF.

HAVE A GOOD DAY!

UGH. I LEFT THE LIGHT ON.

AAAAH!

WHY WOULD A RAT—!

SO GROSS.

FOR REAL ?!

SPLSH

...TO FEEL SO GOOD.

IT'S GOING...

TODAY'S THE DAY I SAY GOODBYE TO THIS LONG HAIR.

BUT MAYBE IT'S A BLESSING IN DISGUISE.

I'M SUCH AN IDIOT.

YOU'VE BEEN GROWING IT FOR SO LONG. WHY CUT IT?

I'M GOOD. JUST DO IT.

ARE YOU SURE, CHIEMI?

...

A RAT GOT TANGLED IN IT.

EEEAAAH!

CHIEMI TOLD ME TO CUT HER HAIR.

I GUESS SOMETHING HAPPENED.

MOM, WHERE ARE THE SCISSORS?

SCISSORS? WHY DO YOU WANT THEM?

EEEE!

TMP TMP TMP

CHIEMI! WHAT HAPPENED ?!

MOM! CHIEMI'S HEAD IS GONE!

EEEE!

CHIEMI'S HEAD!

HER HEAD ...

WHAT HAPPENED TO CHIEMI?!

LET'S GO AFTER THEM!

THEY TOOK HER HEAD AND RAN!

WHO DID IT?!

ARE YOU SERIOUS?!

WHAT HAPPENED?

WHOSE HEAD, BY THE WAY?

HER HEAD WAS CHOPPED CLEAN OFF.

NO, THIS WAS NO RAT!

IT WAS SOME KIND OF SHARP BLADE!

ERI, YOU HAVE TO CALM DOWN!

A RAT! A RAT BIT IT OFF!

SHE SAID A RAT BIT IT OFF!

THE AMANO GIRL, THE PRETTY ONE.

YOU MEAN CHIEMI?

ARE THE POLICE STILL NOT HERE?!

IT'S SUNDAY. WHERE'S MR. AMANO GOTTEN OFF TO?!

HE'S PROBABLY GOLFING.

MRS. AMANO!

MRS. AMANO, STAY WITH ME!

WHAT A TERRIBLE THING TO DO!

I THINK THE POLICE ARE HERE.

RRRRRRING

HIRAZUKA

HELLO?

JESUS. DO THEY KNOW WHAT TIME IT IS?

RRK

RRRRRRRING

BASTARD. WHO *IS* THIS?!

RRRK RRRK RRRK

HELLO? WHO IS THIS?

YOU'VE GOT SOME NERVE.

SO YOU'RE HARASSING ME 'CAUSE I DUMPED YOU?

RRRSHK RRRSHK

OH, I KNOW! IT'S YOU, CHIEMI, ISN'T IT?

RRRK RRRK RRRK

GODDAMMIT! MESSING WITH MY HEAD.

HEY!

KACHAK

CLACK

IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN CHIEMI.

I'M STILL HALF-ASLEEP.

HANG ON.

SHE DIED A WEEK AGO.

SHE WAS REALLY SOMETHING, NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT. IT'S A SHAME.

WHEN I HEARD SHE WAS DEAD, I ASSUMED IT WAS SUICIDE.

SHE WAS SO FOCUSED ON HANGING ON TO ME.

SHE JUST LET THE STRESS BUILD UP.

SHE WASN'T ONE TO EXPRESS HER FEELINGS.

ESPECIALLY WITH ME.

BRRRRK

ACTUALLY... THAT SOUND...

THAT WAS...

GUESS I'M GETTING SENILE HERE.

WHY DID I THINK IT WAS CHIEMI?

IT SOUNDED LIKE CHIEMI GRINDING HER TEETH.

RRRRRRING

RRRRRRING

AMANO

HM? WHAT IS IT, ERI?

HAVE YOU SEEN THE FLASHLIGHT?

DAD.

THANKS. I'M JUST GONNA TAKE A LOOK IN THE ATTIC.

WHAT ARE YOU UP TO?

THE ATTIC?

OH... IT'S RIGHT HERE.

I'LL GO UP THERE.

OH, ERI. WAIT A SECOND.

WE HAVEN'T HEARD THE RAT LATELY, RIGHT? SO MAYBE THE TRAP GOT IT?

MAKES SENSE.

I'M FINE.

CHIEMI DIED UPSTAIRS. WE CAN'T LOSE YOU, TOO.

NO, I DO.

I'M FINE. YOU DON'T NEED TO WORRY, DAD.

YOUR HEART CONDITION HAS GOTTEN WORSE SINCE THEN, Y'KNOW.

NO WORRIES. YOU WAIT THERE.

WHERE WAS IT AGAIN?

YOU FIND THE RAT?

DAD!

AH!

HE'S TAKING FOREVER.

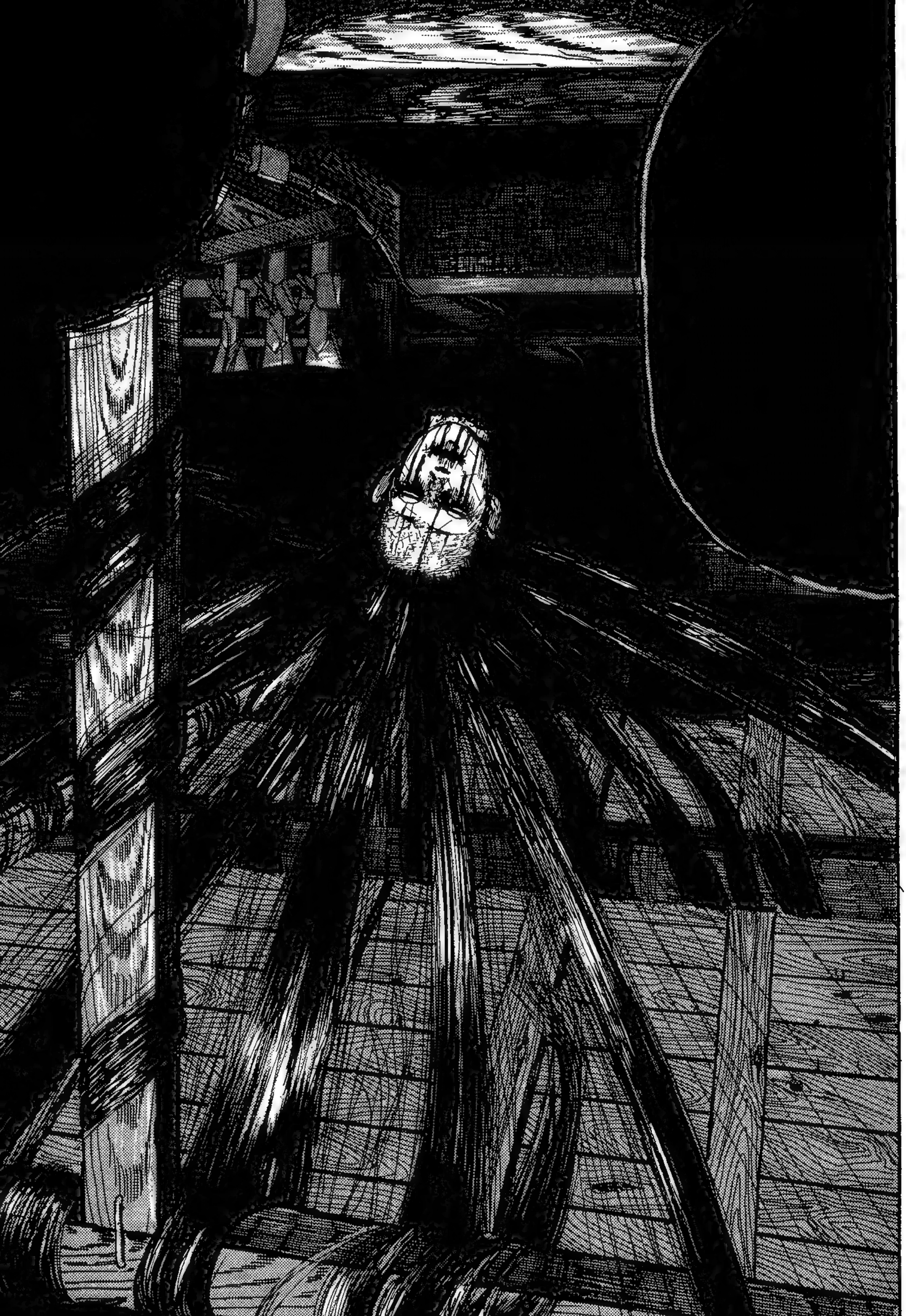
DAD!

DAD!

DAD!
WHAT'S
WRONG?!

ARE YOU
DEAD?!

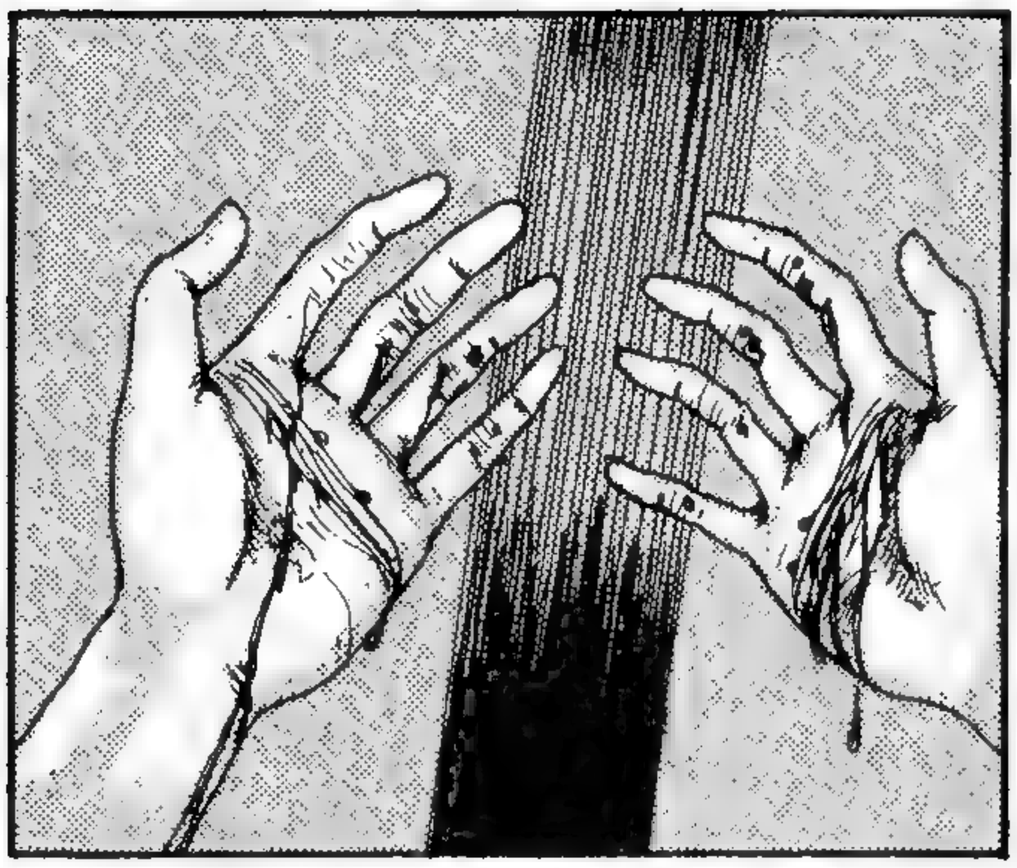
ANSWER
ME!



CHIEMI!

I'M GONNA GET YOU DOWN RIGHT NOW!

WHO WOULD DO THIS...



IT WON'T COME LOOSE!

S-SCISSORS. WE NEED SCISSORS.

...
MY HANDS ...

ARK
ARK
ARK

CLACK

RRK RRK RRK

ZSH ZSH ZSH ZSH ZSH

FWSH

KUNK

KUNK KONK

KONK KONK

KUNK

YOU'RE ALIVE, AREN'T YOU?!

KUNK

CHIEMI! WAIT!

CHIEMI!

THE HAIR HAS ITS OWN WILL.

YOU'RE NOT ALIVE. IT'S... THE HAIR.

NO.

IT KILLED CHIEMI.

ALMOST AS THOUGH IT WERE CHARGING OFF TO SOME FINAL PURPOSE.

THE HAIR EVENTUALLY SLITHERED OFF SOMEWHERE, LIKE A SNAKE.

S—

STOP, PLEASE...

HIRAZUK

JUST GO AWAY!

シナリオどおりの恋

SCRIPTED LOVE

I WANT TO GET TO KNOW PEOPLE, GO OUT WITH THEM. FOR MY SCRIPTS. I WANT TO HAVE A BROAD PERSPECTIVE.

KAORI! YOU'VE GOT TO UNDERSTAND!

WHAT'S THAT?

REPLACE YOU? C'MON!

SO YOU'RE GOING TO TOSS ME ASIDE AND REPLACE ME WITH SOME OTHER GIRL?!

YOU'LL NEVER FEEL LONELY WITH THIS. OKAY?

IT'S A VIDEO I MADE, KAORI. OF ME.

YOU'RE A REAL PIECE OF WORK, TAKAHASHI!

YOU'RE JUST LIKE YOKO SAID.

YOU'RE AWFUL...

AS IF I'M GOING TO LET YOU BREAK US UP!

CHAIR

HOW MANY GIRLS IN THE THEATER TROUPE HAVE YOU MADE CRY LIKE THIS?!

KAORI!

WELL, NOT ANYMORE.

STOP!

KAORI!

EEEAAAAH

WE DON'T HAVE LONG BEFORE WE OPEN, SO MAKE SURE YOU MEMORIZE YOUR LINES ON YOUR OWN TIME.

OKAY, THAT'S IT FOR TODAY'S REHEARSAL.

...

TAKAHASHI AND I MET IN OUR AMATEUR THEATER GROUP. HE MAINLY WROTE THE SCRIPTS.

WHEN WE STARTED DATING, MY FRIEND YOKO GAVE ME A VERY SERIOUS WARNING.

KAORI?

RIGHT.

ESPECIALLY YOU, KAORI. SINCE YOU ONLY JUST JOINED SHIRONEKOZA, YOU'RE THE MOST AMATEUR OF AMATEURS. I'M GOING TO NEED YOU TO WORK EVEN HARDER.

OH! TAKAHASHI.

SHIRONEKOZA THE MAIN STREET OF RIO SCRIPT

KAORI, C'MERE A SEC.

I DID WRITE THE PLAY AND ALL.

DO YOU WANT TO RUN LINES AT MY HOUSE?

AH! YOKO!

SORRY, TAKAHASHI. KAORI'S BUSY TODAY.

SURE.

YOU CAN'T GO OUT WITH HIM.

HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU?

AND WHY AM I BUSY TODAY?

YOKO, LET GO OF ME!

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT HE'S REALLY LIKE YET.

NO!

WHAT? BUT HE'S SUCH A GREAT GUY. HE'S SO NICE.

HE MOVES FROM ONE TO THE NEXT, TOSSING THEM ASIDE. HE'S SOMETHING ELSE.

AAH, IF I HAD KNOWN THIS'D HAPPEN, I WOULDN'T HAVE ASKED YOU TO JOIN THE GROUP.

DON'T YOU KNOW HOW MANY GIRLS IN THE TROUPE HE'S HURT?

I HAVEN'T SEEN IT, BUT IT'S PROBABLY HIM POSING LIKE A ROCK STAR. EVEN THOUGH HE'S JUST A NOBODY.

APPARENTLY, HE GIVES THE GIRL A TAPE OF *HIMSELF*.

AND LISTEN, KAORI. THE SICKEST PART IS WHEN HE STARTS TALKING ABOUT BREAKING UP.

YOU GOTTA LISTEN TO ME.

HEY? KAORI?

KAORI!

HE'S LITERALLY *THAT* IN LOVE WITH HIMSELF.

HE'S ALL, "I'M LEAVING YOU, BUT I'M ON THIS TAPE. IF YOU GET LONELY, WATCH IT." THAT KIND OF DEAL.

T-120

I HAD ALREADY FALLEN FOR TAKAHASHI AT THAT POINT.

OHH, ANTONIO...

I DIDN'T LISTEN TO HER, THOUGH.

THAT WAS GREAT.

YOU'VE GOTTEN A LOT BETTER, KAORI.

DON'T REPROACH YOURSELF.

YOUR WRITING IS SO WONDERFUL.

WELL, I'VE GOT A GOOD SCRIPT.

YOU STILL HAVE YOUR MUSIC, DON'T YOU?

OF COURSE! I'D LIKE TO TRY WRITING FOR TV. THAT'S WHAT I'M STUDYING NOW.

ARE YOU GOING TO GO PRO?

THEY'RE JEALOUS OF YOUR TALENT.

I GUESS THAT'S WHY SOME PEOPLE IN THE GROUP SPREAD WEIRD RUMORS.

IT'S NO EASY JOB, EITHER. LOTS OF COMPETITION OUT THERE.

THAT'S AMAZING. YOU'RE SO FOCUSED.

RUMORS ?

YES...

OF COURSE. DO I LOOK LIKE THAT KIND OF GUY?

NOT AT ALL!

THAT'S ALL LIES, THOUGH, RIGHT?

THEY SAY YOU'RE A REAL PLAYBOY. THAT YOU'VE MADE COUNTLESS GIRLS CRY.

...THE PLAY THE MAIN STREET OF RIO BY THE AMATEUR GROUP SHIRONEKOZA FINISHED ITS RUN IN A SMALL THEATER IN TOWN, TO POSITIVE REVIEWS.

WHILE MY RELATIONSHIP WITH TAKAHASHI GOT MORE SERIOUS...

BUT YOKO WAS RIGHT.

...TAKAHASHI'S ATTITUDE TOWARD ME CHANGED.

CAN WE RUN LINES TODAY?

TAKA-HASHI.

JUST WHEN WE WERE STARTING TO PREPARE FOR OUR NEXT PLAY...

SHE'S A FAN OF SHIRONEKOZA.

WHO'S THIS?

...

SORRY.

I ACTUALLY NEED TO TALK WITH HER TODAY.

BZ
BZ
BZ

...

HOW HAVE YOU BEEN? I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU LATELY. WHAT'S GOING ON?

OH, TAKAHASHI? IT'S ME.

WHY WON'T YOU SEE ME?

NO. WE ARE *NOT* BREAKING UP.

ACTUALLY, YEAH. I'M SORRY.

KAORI... FINE. LET'S TALK. I'LL COME OVER.

YOU FOUND SOMEONE ELSE, DIDN'T YOU?! THAT FANGIRL?

SORRY. IT'S NOT THAT I HATE YOU NOW OR ANYTHING.

JUST WAIT THERE FOR ME.

HEY...

SOB... SOB...

KLAK

WHAT AM I GOING TO DO...?

ME AND KAORI SCRIPT (1)

I GUESS HE WROTE THIS?

SCRIPT ?

ME AND KAORI SCRIPT (1)

Takahashi: The truth i

Kaori: That reminds

I read all of them,

just great, actua

I almost want

aori: Right.

akahashi: That's why I
ent my uncle's place.
ut actually, it's nice to
e in a country town
nd the water's really good.

MAYBE IT HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH THIS TAPE?

THE NOTE-BOOK'S FULL...

IS THIS SCRIPT A CONVERSATION BETWEEN US...?

BUT WHY?

KACHAK

KACHAK

HEY!

YEAH? THAT'S GREAT.

ME AND KAORI SCRIPT

FLIP FLIP FLIP

HOW ARE YOU FEELING, KAORI?

ALL I HAVE TO DO IS SAY MY LINES.

ME AND KA SCRIPT

I GET IT. THIS IS THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN ME AND HIM IN THE VIDEO.

OH!

Takahashi: Hey. How are you feeling Kaori?

Kaori: I'm doing good.

Takahashi: Yeah? That's great.

Kaori: How about you?

I HAD THOUGHT IT WAS JUST A VIDEO OF HIM POSING, SO I WAS A LITTLE SHOCKED. HE'D ACTUALLY SPENT SIX HOURS MAKING THIS FOR ME.

THE VIDEOTAPE TAKAHASHI GAVE ME WAS A RECORDING SO THAT WE COULD HAVE A LONG CONVERSATION. SIX HOURS.

I KNOW IT WAS A WAY OF BREAKING UP WITH ME, BUT STILL...

MIND IF I SMOKE?

KAORI, HOW ABOUT WE GO SEE A MOVIE?

WHICH MOVIE?

THERE'S A REVIVAL OF *BLACK ORCA*.

I'VE NEVER HEARD OF IT.

MMM. I DON'T ACTUALLY KNOW IT MYSELF.

BUT IT GRADUALLY GOT SMOOTHER.

SHIRONEKOZA BOSS KOTARO SHIRONE IS PRETTY STRICT, HUH?

R-RIGHT. I MEAN, I'M ALWAYS... AH...

HE SAID SOME REALLY MEAN STUFF WHEN YOU FIRST JOINED.

...YES... AH...

IT DIDN'T GO WELL AT FIRST.

HE'S ALIVE!

HE'S ALIVE INSIDE THE MONITOR!

IT FELT LIKE I WAS REALLY TALKING WITH HIM, EVEN THOUGH IT WAS THIS ORCHESTRATED CONVERSATION.

AND HE'LL BE MINE FOREVER.

I GOT SO INVOLVED I FORGOT ABOUT HIS CHEATING AND HOW I KILLED HIM.

KAORI
...

JUMP

K-KAORI
...

PLEASE...
CALL AN
AMBULANCE
...

T-
TAKAHASHI
!

EEAH!

HURRY. IF I LOSE ANY MORE BLOOD, I REALLY WILL DIE.

KAORI ...

KAORI, HELP ME.

OH NO... YOU'RE ALIVE.

JUST STOP. ENOUGH ALREADY.

PLEASE.

I'LL MARRY YOU.

IF I DIE, YOU'LL BE A MURDERER. YOU KNOW THAT, RIGHT? IF YOU HELP ME, I WON'T REPORT THIS.

TAKA-HASHI.

NO... IN FACT... I'LL TAKE BACK THE BREAKUP.

NO MORE.

...IS OVER THERE.

AFTER ALL, THE TAKAHASHI I LOVE...

I LOVE YOU, TOO.

I LOVE YOU.

KAORI ...

JUST A FAKE THAT SAYS THE SAME THINGS OVER AND OVER! YOU'LL GET BORED OF IT SOON.

Y-YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS. THAT'S JUST A VIDEO.

ME AND KAORI SCRIPT (1)

HE WOULD NEVER BETRAY ME.

NOT LIKE YOU.

NO MATTER HOW MUCH TIME GOES BY, HE'LL ALWAYS BE AS FRESH AS HE IS NOW.

I WON'T. NOT WITH THIS WONDERFUL SCRIPT.

KAORI !!

N- NO...

YOUR SCRIPT IS INCREDIBLE.

ME AND KAORI SCRIPT

!

...

HEY! HOW ARE YOU FEELING, KAORI?

WUNK

THUD

YEAH? THAT'S GREAT.

I'M DOING GOOD.

呪われた剣

つるぎ

THE REANIMATOR'S SWORD

YOUR GRANDPA'S ON HIS DEATHBED, THOUGH?

ARE YOU SURE, KEIJI? IT'S THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT.

PFT!

BUT YOUR MOM'S GOTTA BE WORRIED ABOUT YOU.

THAT'S NOTHING TO ME.

WE'RE GONNA GET ONE FOR SURE TONIGHT, MURASE.

ANYWAY.

A HUMAN SOUL.

THE ONLY ONE SHE CARES ABOUT IS MY LITTLE BROTHER, JIRO.

HOW ABOUT WE AT LEAST COVER IT IN FOIL? A PLAIN OLD NET'S JUST GONNA BURN UP.

...I GUESS, YEAH.

BUT CAN WE ACTUALLY CATCH ONE WITH THAT NET?

YOU GOT ANY BETTER IDEAS?

I SURE DO. AND I HEAR THEY FLY THROUGH HERE A LOT.

YOU REALLY BELIEVE THAT?

LOOK!

?

...

IT'S A SWARM!

W-WOW!

WAIT, KEIJI! I DON'T WANT TO!

C'MON, MURASE! LET'S GO!

HAAH! HAAH!

HAAH! HAAH!

PFT! COWARD!

WHERE— *HAAH HAAH*— ARE THEY— *HAAH!*

—GOING ?!

IF YOU'RE GONNA GO, GO BY YOURSELF!

A SPIRIT!

AAAH!

I CAN'T ALLOW YOU TO LIVE, THEN.

YOU SAW THAT, HM?

HELP!

GAH!

STOP!

CRAP!

SEIICHIRO SOGA

SEIICHIRO SOGA

SO YOU'RE AWAKE?

THIS SHRINE'S ON THE EDGE OF A CLIFF!

AIEE! OW OW OW.

FWSH

MOM.

THE NEIGHBOR MR. YAMADA FOUND YOU AND BROUGHT YOU BACK.

1965 月 3日

YOU MUSTN'T SIT UP SUDDENLY. YOU FELL OFF A CLIFF.

REALLY LUCKY, KEIJI.

I REMEMBER... I MUST BE SUPER LUCKY TO HAVE SURVIVED A FALL FROM THAT HIGH UP.

WHILE YOU WERE OUT PLAYING AT NIGHT.

BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, KEIJI, GRANDFATHER PASSED AWAY.

IF HE DIED LAST NIGHT... THAT WAS RIGHT WHEN I SAW THAT SWARM OF SPIRITS.

GRANDPA'S COLD GOT WORSE AND TURNED INTO PNEUMONIA.

HIS DEATH WOULD HAVE A REAL IMPACT ON THE WORLD OF JAPANESE POLITICS.

GRANDPA WAS A MAJOR POLITICIAN.

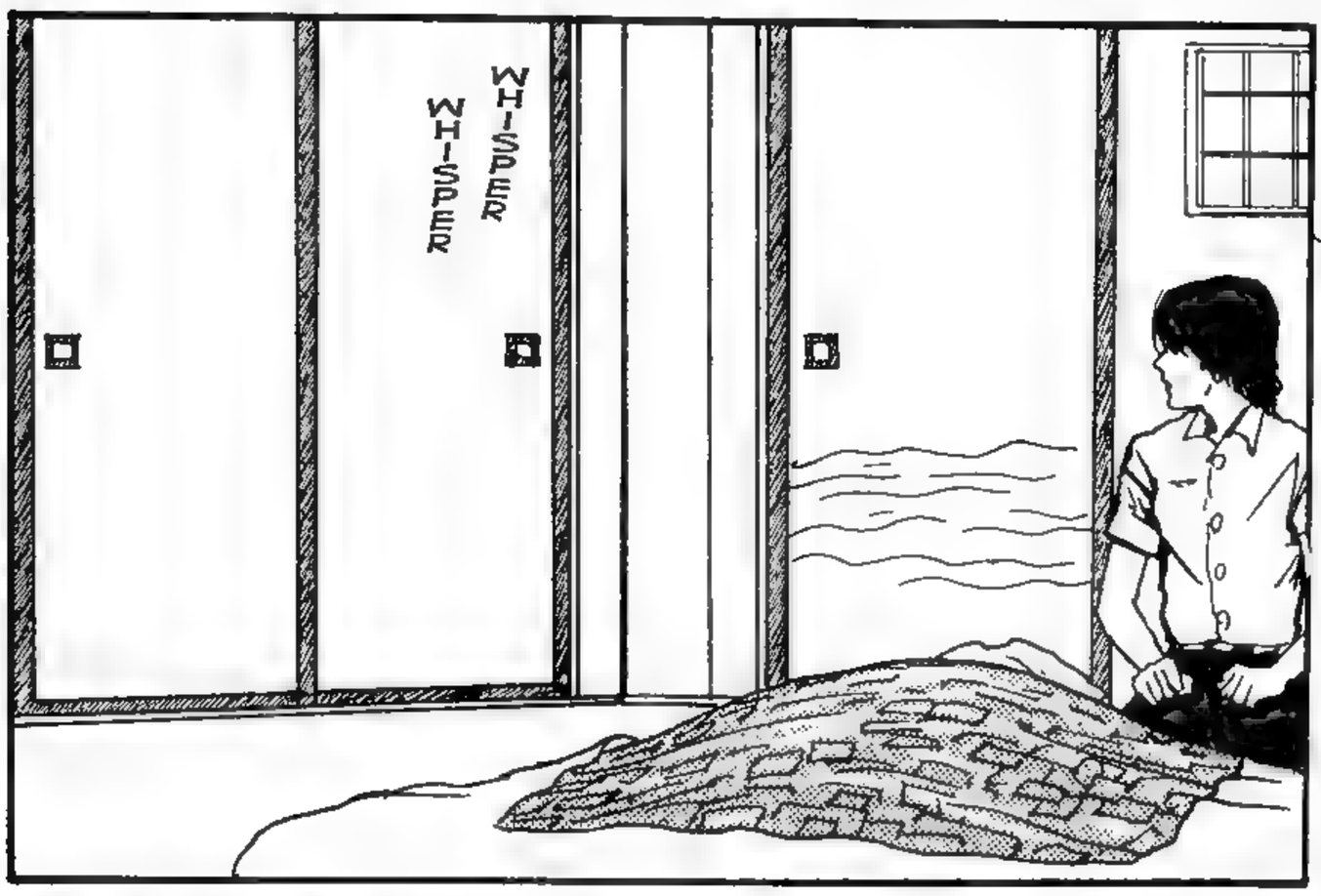
IT'S A TIME OF REAL CRISIS FOR US. WHAT SHOULD THE SOGA FACTION DO NOW?

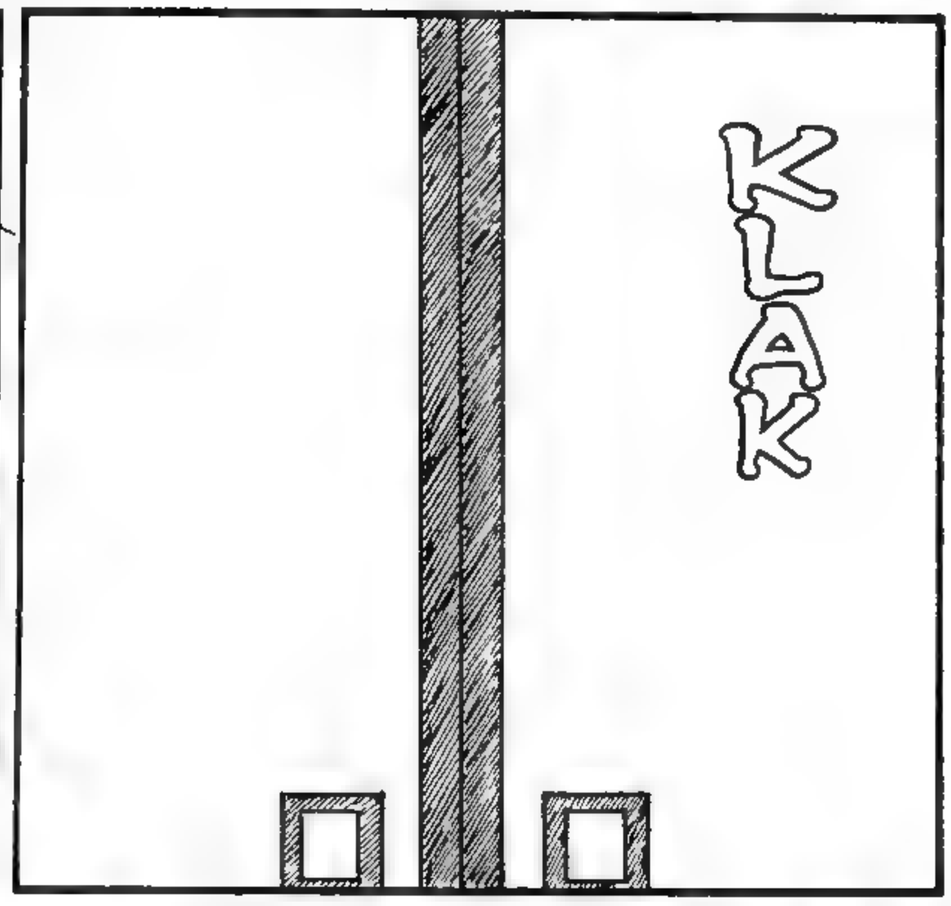
HONESTLY. MR. SOGA DYING DOES NOT HELP ANYTHING.

BUT I FELT NOTHING.

AND WHY IS THAT?
RIGHT NOW, WE'RE THE ONLY ONES WHO KNOW HE'S DEAD. WE CAN'T LET WORD GET OUT.

YOU DIDN'T TELL ANYONE, MR. MATSUYAMA ?
REPRESENTATIVE SOGA, YOUR FATHER'S PASSED, BUT NO ONE'S COME TO CALL WITH CONDOLENCES.
NO I DIDN'T. YOU SAID NOT TO.


WHISPER
WHISPER


KLAK

WE'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU. PLEASE, COME IN.

BUT I SAW A WHOLE SWARM OF THEM.

NOPE.

DID YOU CATCH A SPIRIT, KEIJI?

ALL RIGHT. THIS WAY.

HE PASSED AWAY LAST NIGHT. IS THAT ALL RIGHT?

IT'S FINE. THE DAYS MATTER NOT.

AH!

NOTHING. MIGHT I ASK YOU ALL TO PLEASE LEAVE THE ROOM?

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU NEED?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING THERE, KEIJI? COME ALONG.

OF COURSE. GENTLEMEN, WE'LL GO ACROSS THE HALL.

WHO *IS* THAT GUY?

AND WHAT'S HE DOING HERE?

SO IT *IS* HIM.

HE'S A STRANGE MAN. ARE YOU SURE HE'S NOT A FRAUD?

SOGA, IS SUCH A THING REALLY POSSIBLE?

I UNDERSTAND. BUT HE'S A REAL REVIVER. A REANIMATOR OF THE DEAD.

I FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE, TOO. THIS IS RIDICULOUS.

AND WHAT PROOF DO YOU HAVE OF THAT?

FWM

BWAAA

BOOM!

IT'S A SOUL!

A SPIRIT IS GOING INTO GRANDPA'S BODY.

SHE'S

ENTER!

THE WOUND IN YOUR STOMACH WILL SOON HEAL.

LIVE A LONG LIFE, OLD MAN.

FWSH

POP

WHEEZE
WHEEZE

G-GRANDPA CAME BACK TO LIFE!

STILL LIFE IN THESE BONES YET.

M-MY NOSE IS BLEEDING.

O-OHH.

WHEEZE
WHEEZE

DRIP

DRIP

TATSUTA CENTER

TUNK

AFTER HAVING BEEN ILL FOR SOME TIME, TODAY, MR. SOGA...

CHATTER CHATTER CHATTER CHATTER

CHATTER

MR. SEIICHIRO SOGA RECOVERY BANQUET

HE REALLY *DID* DIE.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

BUT NONE OF THEM KNOW THAT.

CHATTER CHATTER

CHATTER CHATTER

AND WHY DOES MY DAD KNOW HIM?

WHO ON EARTH WAS THAT MAN...?

AH!

I JUST KNOW IT'S HIM.

IT'S HEADED TOWARD THE SHRINE AGAIN.

A SPIRIT!

AS IF COMPELLED BY SOME GREATER FORCE, I HEADED FOR THE SHRINE.

WELCOME.

YOU HAVE THE SAME EYES AS I DO.

YOU HAVE THE POTEN-TIAL, HM?

WHO *ARE* YOU?

THE VERY EYES OF A REANIMATOR!

THAT SINGULAR TRANSPAR-ENCY.

...TO YOUR POWER AS A REVIVER OF THE DEAD.

YOU WILL AT LAST AWAKEN...

LAST NIGHT, I GAVE YOUR GRANDFATHER A HUNDRED YEARS OF LIFE FORCE.

AND THE LIFE FORCE OF THE DEAD FLOWS INTO ME ONCE MORE... SUCH A MARVELOUS THING.

...YOU WILL BE ABLE TO COLLECT THE LIFE FORCE OF PEOPLE AND ANIMALS WANDERING THIS EARTH...

AND WHEN THE CONDITIONS ARE RIGHT...

...AND GIVE THAT LIFE FORCE TO THE DEAD.

BUT THANKS TO YOU, I WAS ABLE TO RETURN TO HEALTH AND STAND HERE BEFORE YOU LIKE THIS.

I KNOW I CAUSED A GREAT DEAL OF WORRY FOR EVERYONE IN TOWN AND ALL OF MY SUPPORTERS.

TATSUTA CENTER

CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP

NOW THEN, LET'S ASK MR. SOGA FOR A FEW WORDS.

IT MAY BE PRESUMPTUOUS, BUT I HOPE TO KEEP GOING FOR A HUNDRED MORE YEARS.

We're counting on it!

HA HA HA

CLAP CLAP

I FEEL LIKE A MAN REBORN. I'M READY TO DO EVERYTHING IN MY POWER TO DEVELOP THIS TOWN.

MAYBE WORSE THAN MURDER.

RAISING THE DEAD IS A SIN.

MARVELOUS ?

MURDER? WHY?

A SIN?

THEN YOU WOULD REJECT YOUR OWN REVIVED PEOPLE? YOUR GRAND-FATHER?

MIGHTY WORDS FOR A MERE BOY.

I COULD NEVER BE ON YOUR SIDE.

IT'S JUST OBVIOUS.

ONCE A LIVING CREATURE IS BORN, THEY MUST DIE AT SOME POINT.

WHAT YOU'RE DOING IS UPSETTING THE NATURAL ORDER OF THE WORLD.

WHEN DID I ASK YOU TO BE ON MY SIDE?

SIDE?

?!

THE MAGIC IN THIS SWORD IS REQUIRED TO ACTUALLY REVIVE SOMEONE.

AND THERE IS ONLY ONE OF ITS KIND IN THIS WORLD.

JUST BECAUSE ONE HAS THE NATURE OF A REANIMATOR DOESN'T MEAN ONE CAN *BECOME* A REANIMATOR.

I'LL KILL YOU BEFORE THAT CAN HAPPEN.

JUST AS I ONCE DID.

IF I LET YOU LIVE, YOU WILL COME TO TAKE IT SOMEDAY. MOST CERTAINLY.

YOUR MOTHER DIED WHILE PREGNANT WITH HER SECOND SON.

WHAT? WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

IT'S IRONIC. TO THINK I WOULD END UP KILLING THEIR ELDEST SON...

DID YOU REANIMATE SOMEONE ELSE BEFORE GRANDPA?

...AFTER HELPING THE PEOPLE OF THE SOGA HOUSE TIME AND TIME AGAIN.

YOU'RE LYING!

DIE!

THAT'S A LIE!

BOMPF

!

BAM

SKREENK

ALL THE LIFE FORCE I BLEW INTO YOU WILL EXIT YOUR MOUTH.

HA HA HA! DON'T STRAIN YOURSELF, KEIJI.

GRAB

I TOOK PITY ON YOU AND BROUGHT YOU BACK TO LIFE. SO? WOULD YOU REJECT YOUR OWN SELF?

THAT NIGHT, YOU FELL OFF THE CLIFF AND DIED.

WHAT ?!

IF I DIE, MY MAGIC WILL COME UNDONE, AND THOSE I REVIVED WILL DIE ONCE MORE. GO AHEAD AND STAB ME!

WELL? GO AHEAD AND STAB ME.

FWOOM

AAAAAAA-IIIIIIII

DO IT!

HYOO

YOU'RE LYING!

WHO

BOF BOF BOF

WAAH!

EEEEAH!

MR. SOGA!

HELP!

AAAH! TSUYUKO! JIRO!

BOF

Ah!

OH, NOBLE SWORD...

PANT PANT

I SWEAR MY ETERNAL LOYALTY TO YOU.

WAS THIS YOUR WILL?

KSHAZ

I HAVE AWAKENED.

AS A PROUD REANIMATOR.

THE REANIMATOR'S SWORD/END

A FATHER'S LOVE

THEIR MOTHER CAME FROM A GOOD FAMILY AND WAS A KIND AND RESERVED WOMAN.

THE THREE TODOH CHILDREN WERE RAISED BY A STRICT FATHER.

THE CHILDREN FEARED AND RESPECTED HIM.

AND IT WOULD NO DOUBT CONTINUE TO GET BIGGER.

THE BUSINESS THEIR FATHER BUILT FROM SCRATCH GREW AT A GOOD PACE.

BUT THEY LASTED LESS THAN A MINUTE, AND THEN THE CHILDREN WERE HAPPY AGAIN.

ACCORDING TO HER DIARY, ONE OF THEM WOULD HAVE A HEADACHE AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK.

THE SOLE CONCERN OF THEIR MOTHER IN THEIR AFFLUENT LIFE WAS...

THE DOCTOR DIAGNOSED THEM AS MIGRAINES.

...THE HEADACHES THAT ALL THREE OF HER YOUNG CHILDREN SUFFERED.

HE RAN AWAY OVER AND OVER, BUT WAS ALWAYS BROUGHT BACK.

THE ONCE-OBEDIENT BOY WENT THROUGH A PERIOD OF FIERCE REBELLION.

THE TRAGEDY BEGAN WHEN THE OLDEST, SATORU, WAS 14.

HE EVENTUALLY KILLED HIMSELF.

THEY STILL HAD THE TWO YOUNGER CHILDREN, BUT THEY TOO BEGAN TO DISPLAY STRANGE BEHAVIOR...

...THUS INVITING FURTHER TRAGEDY.

THE MOTHER WROTE IN HER DIARY THAT IT WAS AROUND THIS TIME SHE STARTED TO HAVE A HAZY UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT WAS ACTUALLY GOING ON.

HAAH HAAH

HAAH HAAH

SHE'S COMING!

HAAH

EIICHI! WAIT UP!

SO YOU'RE HIDING IN YOUR FRIEND'S HOUSE ?

HAAH HAAH

DING DONG DING DONG

EIICHI!

AH!

WHAT'S GOING ON, EIICHI? IT'S THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT.

HAAH HAAH

CHASED ?!

YOU GOTTA HELP ME, TSUKASA. I'M BEING CHASED!

MIHO ...

NO WAY! YOU GO HOME!

C'MON. LET'S GO HOME.

I'M NOT A KID ANYMORE. LEAVE ME ALONE!

DON'T GO HAVING A TANTRUM!

EIICHI.

...

NO. IT'S NOTHING.

DID YOU TWO HAVE A FIGHT?

HEY, MIHO, WHAT'S GOING ON? WHY ARE YOU SO MAD?

TSUKASA... I'M GOING HOME. I'LL SEE YOU LATER.

EIICHI.

MIHO WAS ACTING DIFFERENT FROM USUAL.

I'VE NEVER SEEN HER LIKE THAT. THOSE EYES...

WELL, JUST MAKE UP, OKAY?

THE TODOH HOUSE

OH. HI, KIDS.

I'M HOME, MOTHER. I BROUGHT MY DEAR BROTHER.

ZZZ

NSH NSH

WHAT WERE YOU THINKING, EIICHI? GET THEM OUT OF THE WAY.

HONESTLY. PILING UP ALL THESE CHAIRS IN FRONT OF DADDY'S STUDY.

PERHAPS YOU COULD TRY ACTING A LITTLE MORE LIKE THE FUTURE HEAD OF THIS FAMILY?

I DID NOT RAISE YOU TO TURN INTO AN IDIOT THE MINUTE YOU HIT PUBERTY.

EIICHI, WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS? WHY DID YOU LOCK ME IN MY STUDY?

NOW THAT SATORU'S DEAD, IT'S ALL ON YOUR SHOULDERS.

MIHO, RUN ALONG TO BED NOW.

SHE'S NOT EVEN 12, BUT SHE'S SO MATURE.

YOU COULD LEARN A THING OR TWO FROM MIHO.

FINE. IF YOU HATE THE TODOH FAMILY THAT MUCH, YOU CAN LEAVE! I'VE GOT NO USE FOR YOU!

STILL TALKING BACK?!

BAM

...NOT UNDERSTAND ANYTHING.

MIHO DOES...

HEE HEE HEE!

WAH HA HA HA! HA HA HA HA!

EIICHI! YOU SHOULDN'T BE PLAYING OUTSIDE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT!

HEE HEE HEE!

WHOOPS!

OH, HEY, MIHO!

GO! GO!

HERE WE GOOOOO!

I'M JUST HAVING A LITTLE FUN.

DON'T TELL ANYONE.

VRRRR

YIKES. WOULDN'T WANT TO FALL ON THIS ROAD.

ALL RIGHT! LET'S GET ONTO THE HIGHWAY!

WHOOPS!

HEH HEH!

KRRK

THIS MAKES ME FEEL LIKE TELLING ALL THOSE GROWN-UPS TO GO EAT SHIT!

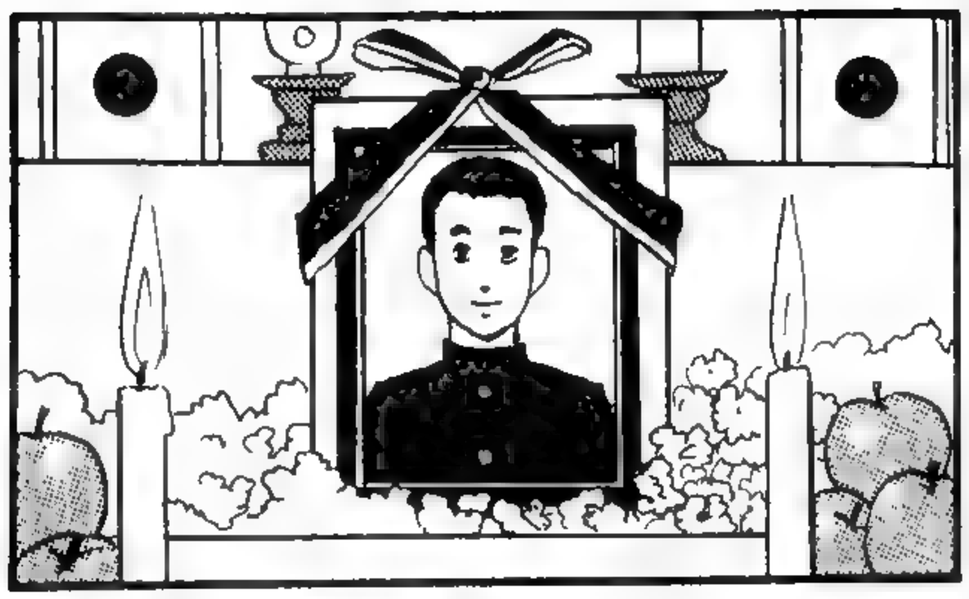
HA HA HA! I'M FREE! FREEEE!

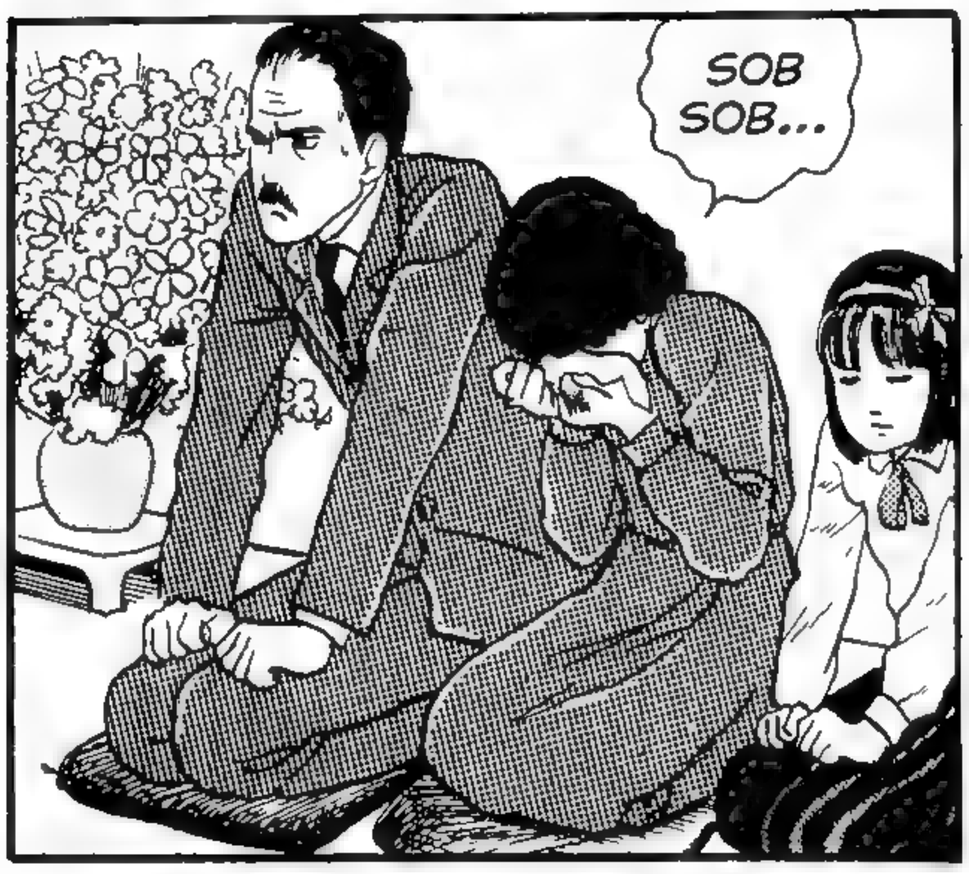
SLAM

AH!

VRRRR

DUMMY, YOU WENT AND FELL. OKAY THEN. I'M SLEEPY. SORRY, BUDDY. I'M GOING TO SLEEP NOW. YOU TAKE THE WHEEL.

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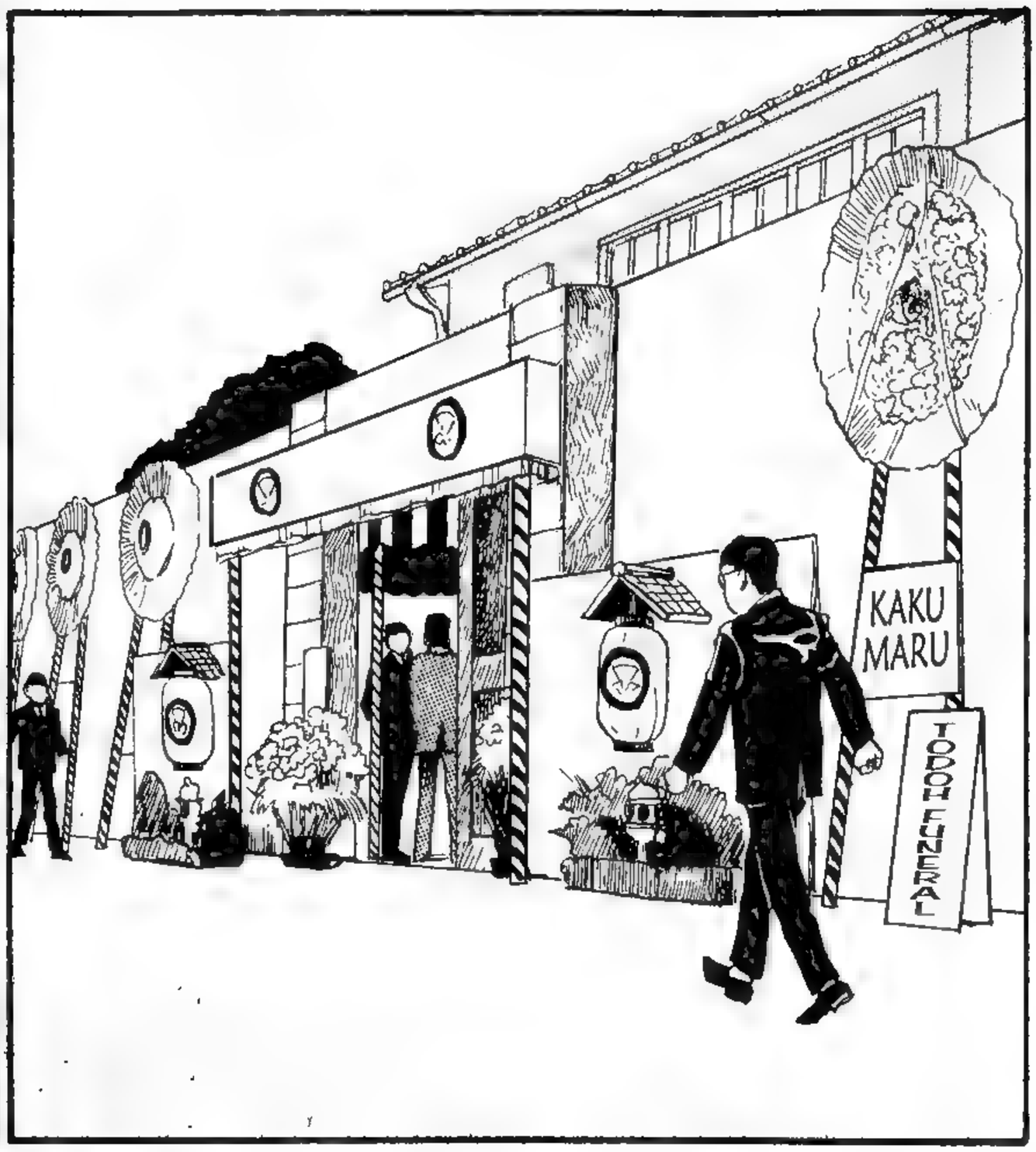
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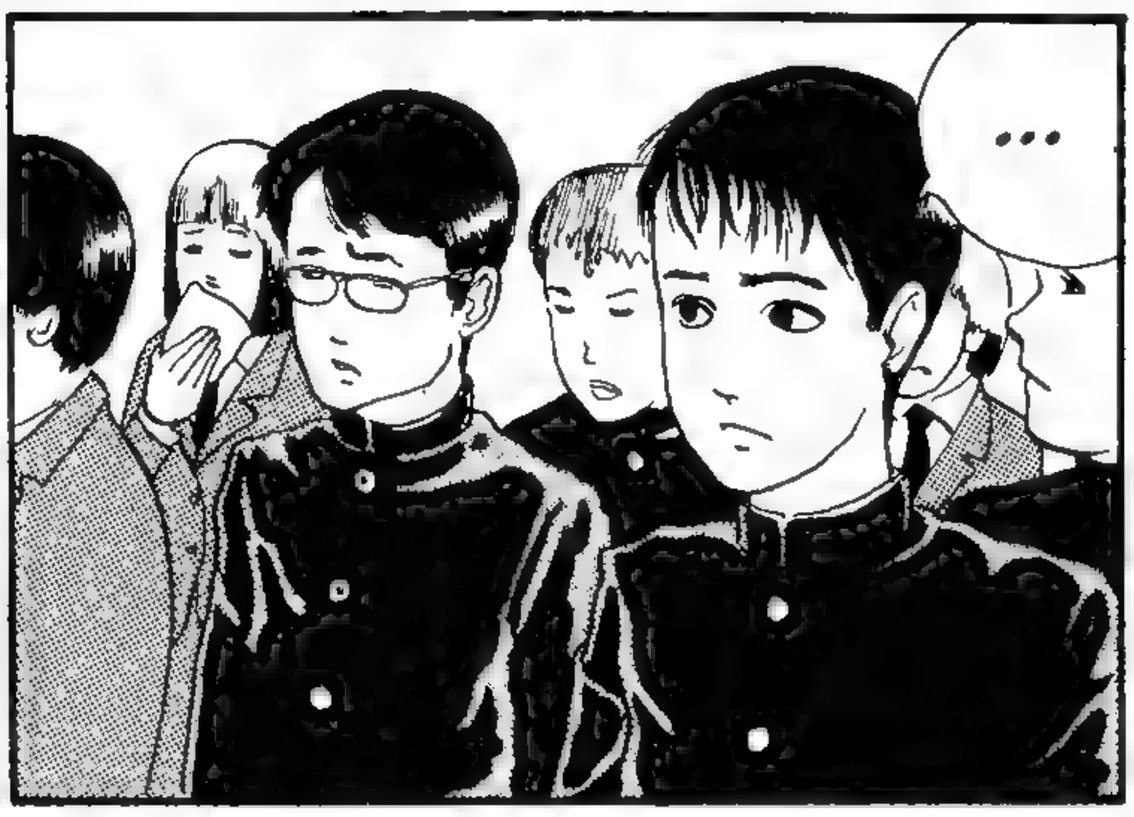
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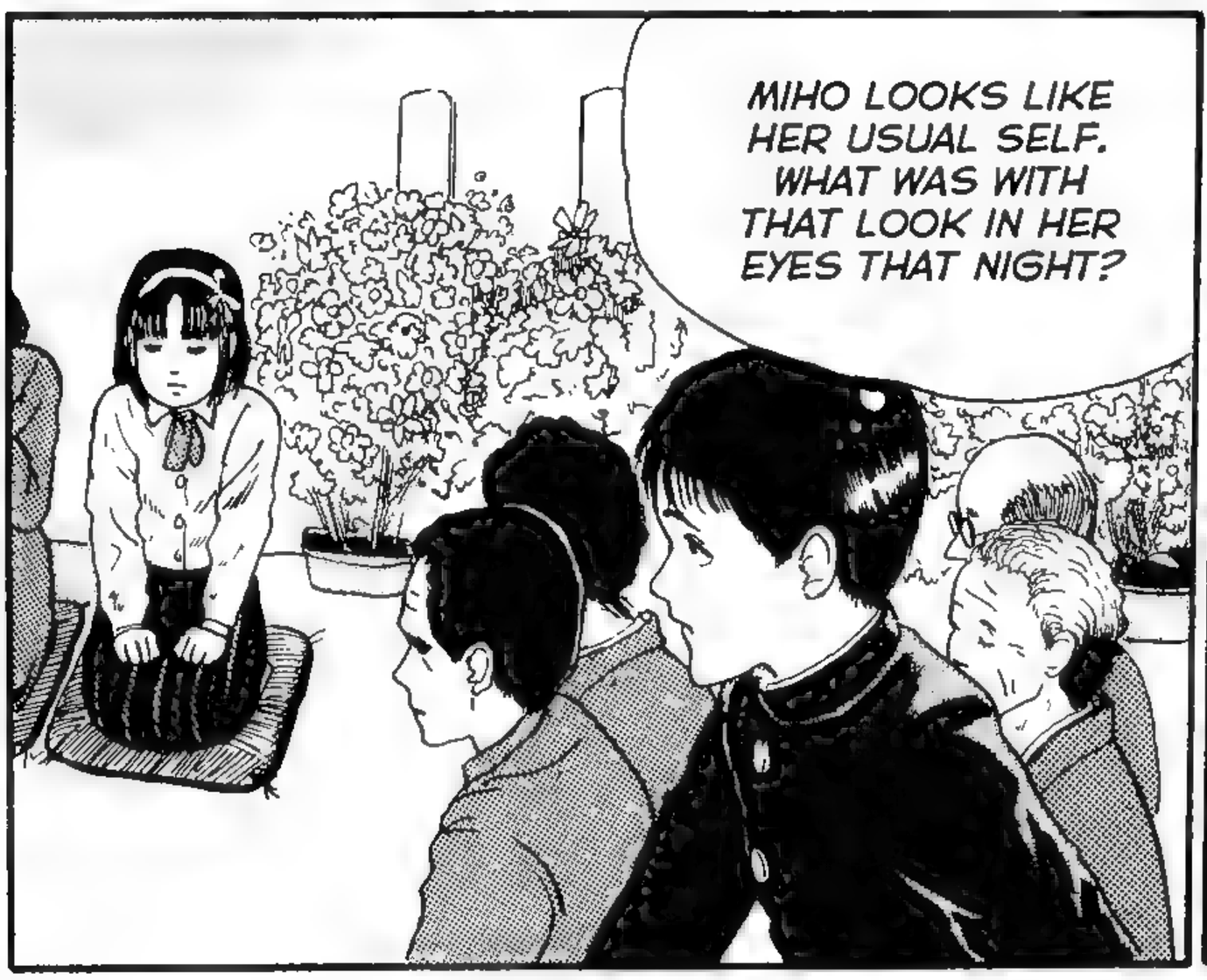

MIHO LOOKS LIKE HER USUAL SELF. WHAT WAS WITH THAT LOOK IN HER EYES THAT NIGHT?

OH. RIGHT.
HEY, TSUKASA! IT'S YOUR TURN TO DO THE INCENSE.

THIS IS JUST WHAT I HEARD, BUT... THEY SAID IT WAS A CAR ACCIDENT, BUT HE WAS JUST LYING THERE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE HIGHWAY.

SHH! DON'T YELL!

SUICIDE ?!

TSUKASA, I HEARD EIICHI COMMITTED SUICIDE.

I KINDA GET IT, THOUGH. THERE'S BEEN SOMETHING OFF ABOUT HIM SINCE ELEMENTARY.

AND HE WASN'T A DRUNK OR ANYTHING. LYING DOWN ON A HIGHWAY, THAT'S WEIRD. SIT FOR A SEC, TSUKASA.

HERE I COME, EIICHI!

AAAAAAH!

HE WAS THERE, TOO, RIGHT?

REMEMBER? THAT TIME IN FIFTH GRADE WHEN WE WENT TO KIDS' FOREST AT ASAHIGAOKA?

SHWF

EEAAH HA HA HA HA!

WAH HA HA HA HA!

HEY, EIICHI! COME DOWN! THAT'S DANGER-OUS!

IT WAS WEIRD. HIS EYES WERE ALL BLOOD-SHOT.

AND THEN HE WAS FINE AND STARTED RUNNING AROUND.

FLASH

WHILE WE WERE FOOLING AROUND, HE GOT A HEADACHE AND WAS SITTING OFF TO THE SIDE...

YEAH ...

HEY, YOU OKAY?

RIGHT. THERE WAS THAT LOOK IN HIS EYES.

WHEN I TALKED TO HIM THE NEXT DAY, HE DIDN'T REMEMBER ANY OF IT. HE WAS A PRETTY WEIRD GUY.

HM? WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

...HIS BROTHER KILLED HIMSELF, TOO. THEY'RE, LIKE, CURSED.

YES, EXACTLY. AND...

...

HI, MIHO.

C'MON, CHEER UP.

WE NEVER FOUGHT.

FIGHTING ?

SO...THAT NIGHT... WHY WERE YOU FIGHTING?

UGH. WHAT SHOULD I EVEN SAY?

BUT YOU CAME TO MY HOUSE. WITH EIICHI. YOU LOOKED SUPER ANGRY.

AND I'VE NEVER BEEN TO YOUR HOUSE, TSUKASA.

WE NEVER FOUGHT!

THAT'S WEIRD...

HUH? UM.

PRETTY PATHETIC AT MY AGE.

MAYBE I SHOULDN'T HAVE SAID ANYTHING. I JUST GOT SO NERVOUS.

NO WONDER MIHO GOT ANGRY.

HEY! MIHO!

I'M SORRY!

I CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT THAT NIGHT. AND THE LOOK IN HER EYES.

BUT I DON'T GET IT...

HONEY, WHY ARE WE SO UNLUCKY?

FIRST SATORU, AND THEN NOT EVEN TWO YEARS LATER, EIICHI.

...

I PRAY IT WAS. BUT IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN SUICIDE.

WAS IT REALLY AN ACCIDENT?

I DON'T KNOW WHY.

IF YOU GO BACK THROUGH THE HISTORY OF THE TODOHS, THERE'S NO END TO THE SUICIDES.

MY GRAND-FATHER ALSO KILLED HIMSELF.

SATORU ALSO COMMITTED SUICIDE. MAYBE IT'S IN THE TODOH FAMILY BLOOD.

IN YOUR BLOOD?

NO... IT'S JUST A FEELING I HAVE.

SUICIDE ?

A FAMILY OF SUICIDES. I CAN ONLY THINK WE'RE CURSED.

WITH THREE CHILDREN TO FEED, MY MOTHER WORKED HER FINGERS TO THE BONE. BUT EVENTUALLY, SHE WAS AT WITS' END AND SHE DECIDED TO KILL HERSELF AND US. MY OLDER BROTHERS DIED THEN. I WAS MAYBE FOUR YEARS OLD.

...NOT LONG AFTER I WAS BORN.

MY FATHER RACKED UP A LOT OF DEBT AND KILLED HIMSELF...

ISN'T THAT RIGHT, MIHO?

BUT YOU'VE GOT EVERY-THING.

YES, FATHER.

DO YOU KNOW HOW LUCKY YOU ARE COMPARED WITH MY BOY-HOOD? IT'S TRUE I'M HARD ON YOU.

WHICH IS WHY THE TODOH FAMILY IS HERE TODAY.

AND I WON.

I WAS TAKEN IN BY RELATIVES, AND FROM THEN ON, I WORKED LIKE I WAS POS-SESSED.

DID HE REALLY DIE OF HIS OWN WILL?

HONEY, DO YOU THINK EIICHI KILLED HIMSELF?

SO THEN WHY WOULD THOSE DAMNED FOOL SONS OF MINE CHOOSE DEATH?!

ONE SUNDAY, MIHO AND HER FATHER VISITED TSUKASA'S HOUSE.

OH! MIHO! AND MR. TODOH.

TSUKASA, WAS IT? YOU WERE QUITE CLOSE WITH EIICHI, HM?

WE WERE FRIENDS, ANYWAY.

I'M SO GRATEFUL FOR THAT. COME NOW, MIHO. SAY HELLO.

HELLO.

HA HA HA! WHAT ARE YOU BLUSHING FOR?

THE TRUTH IS...MIHO'S FEELING A BIT LONESOME.

IT'S EMBARRASSING, BUT I WAS GOING TO TAKE HER TO AN AMUSEMENT PARK.

AND I WOULDN'T WANT TO SAY YOU'D TAKE EIICHI'S PLACE...

...BUT MAYBE YOU'RE TOO OLD FOR AMUSEMENT PARKS?

NO... NOT AT ALL.

GREAT! IT'S SETTLED. HOP IN!

airy castle

WHAT? UM, YOU'RE NOT GOING ON THE RIDES, SIR?

NO. I'M JUST THE DRIVER TODAY.

ALL RIGHT, TSUKASA. HERE'S SOME MONEY. GO ON AND TAKE MIHO ON THE RIDES.

DON'T BE SHY, MIHO. GO HAVE FUN WITH TSUKASA.

FATHER!

I'LL BE NAPPING ON THIS BENCH.

DOOMF CHANG CHANG DOOMF CHANG CHANG

DOOMF CHANG CHANG DOOMF

C'MON, MIHO!

DOOMF CHANG CHANG

THAT SUCKS. MAYBE YOU GOT A LITTLE SICK FROM THE TEACUPS.

MY HEAD HURTS.

MY HEAD ...

WHAT'S WRONG, MIHO?

DO YOU WANT TO GO BACK TO YOUR DAD?

UH-UH. THIS ALWAYS HAPPENS.

YOU SURE?

I'M OKAY. IT'S GONE NOW.

OKAY, SHOULD WE GET GOING? I WANT TO RIDE THE FERRIS WHEEL WITH YOU.

EXIT

OH YEAH?

WOW! LOOK, TSUKASA! GODZILLA'S OVER THERE!

I THINK IT'S A BALLOON. MIHO, DON'T LEAN ON THE DOOR. IT'S DANGEROUS.

YOU'RE REALLY PALE.

OH, TSU-KASA.

HUH? I AM NOT.

OOOOH! WE'RE SUPER HIGH UP!

YOU DON'T MIND HIGH PLACES?

AH! DON'T *DO* THAT!

KYZZK

HEE HEE HEE!

LIAR. HEE HEE HEE.

WHAT'S WRONG?

YOU REALLY ARE, THOUGH.

NOTHING ...

THUD

AH!

A LITTLE KID TELLING ME I'M CUTE, MY REPUTATION'S RUINED.

I LIKE YOU, TSU-KASA.

HEE HEE HEE!

I MEAN, YOU'RE VERY CUTE.

OH YEAH? WELL, WHATEVER.

TSUKASA, THAT'S JUST WHAT EVERYONE DOES IN THE FERRIS WHEEL. I'M SORRY.

THUD

THUD

KLAK KLAK

ACTUALLY, LET'S TAKE A BREAK.

HEY! LET'S GO ON THE ROLLER COASTER NEXT!

MIHO! STOP IT!

Are we shaking?

NO!

I SAID, STOP!

WHRRRR

I'LL TELL DADDY!

HE GAVE YOU MONEY, DIDN'T HE?!

AAAAH!

WHRRRR

HERE YOU GO.

THANKS!

DOOMF CHANG CHANG
DOOMF CHANG CHANG

ICE

DOOMF CHANG CHANG

ABOUT WHAT?

I'M GLAD, THOUGH.

YES!

ICE CREAM REALLY HITS THE SPOT AFTER GOING ON THE RIDES.

ARE YOU MAD?

N-NO. THAT MAKES SENSE.

MIHO, DON'T RUIN THE MOOD.

GULP ...

SO YOU CAN'T.

IT'S JUST, YOU'RE NOT PART OF THE TODOH FAMILY.

THAT YOU'RE HAVING FUN. MAYBE I DID TAKE EIICHI'S PLACE.

THERE'S NO WAY YOU COULD.

ENTRANCE

YOU KNOW, RIGHT BEFORE HE DIED. HE WENT TO YOUR HOUSE, RIGHT?

WHAT NIGHT?

HEY, TSUKASA? DID EIICHI SAY ANYTHING TO YOU THAT NIGHT?

OH.

WHY?

NO REASON. THAT'S FINE THEN.

WE DIDN'T REALLY TALK ABOUT ANYTHING. EIICHI DIDN'T SAY MUCH, AND THEN YOU CAME OVER PRETTY QUICK.

WHAT DID YOU TWO TALK ABOUT?

I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T REMEMBER THAT.

AND WE'RE OUT OF MONEY. WE CAN'T.

COME ON, TSUKASA!

I DON'T. YOU JUMP AROUND TOO MUCH.

HEY? I WANT TO GO ON THE FERRIS WHEEL AGAIN.

WHAT? AGAIN?

THOSE EYES AGAIN!

...

TSUKASA ...

MIHO!

HA HA HA HA HA!

YOU HAVE TO COME DOWN. IT'S DANGEROUS UP THERE.

RESTROOMS

WAH HA HA HA HA!

MR. TODOH! PLEASE MAKE MIHO STOP THIS!

GO AND GET IT.

HEE HA HA HA HA! FATHER'S SLEEPING. HIS MONEY'S IN THE INSIDE POCKET OF HIS JACKET.

THE VIEW'S GREAT.

WAH HA HA HA! COME ON UP, TSUKASA!

HA HA HA! YOU'VE GOT NO RIGHT TO CALL ME THAT!

AND IF I FALL AND HURT MYSELF, IT SERVES DAD RIGHT.

DUMMY?!

WHAT'LL YOU DO IF YOU FALL?! YOU'RE MAKING YOUR DAD WORRY.

DUMMY!

TICD

AAAH!

AH!

TMP

HOW ABOUT I FALL AS A TEST?

PRETTY EASY FROM A PLACE LIKE THIS!

Are you okay?!

MR. TODOH! THIS IS BAD!

MR. TODOH!

MIHO?

KEH! KEH! KEH!

I'M ALL RIGHT. LEAVE ME ALONE ...

SHE DOESN'T SEEM ALL RIGHT.

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, LITTLE GIRL?

WE SHOULD CALL AN AMBULANCE.

MR. TODOH ...

HUFF HUFF

OH! HERE SHE COMES. LISTEN! IF YOU PULL THIS OFF, YOU'LL KNOW THE JOY OF A GOLD DIGGER!

SHUT UP.

...WAS THE BEGINNING OF THE FINAL TRAGEDY.

TAKE CARE! HAVE A GOOD DAY.

I'M OFF TO SCHOOL, MOTHER.

TWO YEARS AFTER THE INCIDENT AT THE AMUSEMENT PARK—

THE SPRING MIHO STARTED MIDDLE SCHOOL...

TODOH

...I-I-I^VE LIKED YOUR NEAT OUTFIT AND YOUR CUTE FACE...

E-EVER SINCE I SAW YOU AT THE ENTRANCE CEREMONY...

...S-S-S-SO WOULD YOU PLEASE...

T-T-TODOH!

I-I-I'M FROM CLASS A. AOKI.

SHE SAID SHE LIKES SOME-ONE ELSE.

...

I'M SORRY.

YOU'RE BY YOUR-SELF, RIGHT?

LET'S WALK TO-GETHER.

OH! TSUKASA !

YES.

HEY, MIHO. MORNING!

YOU FREE AFTER SCHOOL?

OH! RIGHT.

Y-YES.

OKAY. WAIT FOR ME HERE THEN.

OH. YOU HAVE, TOO.

YOU'VE GOTTEN SO BIG.

BING BONG BAN

Let's go then!

Yes! I don't have cram school today!

...

I'M SORRY. I'M MEETING SOMEONE TODAY.

WAIT!

WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO GIVE ME AN ANSWER?!

GARBAGE CAN

PLEASE! DON'T GO, TODOH!

DID YOU READ MY LETTER?!

SAY SOMETHING! ANSWER ME!

I WON'T ACCEPT THAT!

MIHO!!

ARE YOU GOING OUT WITH HIM?!

YOU WERE WALKING WITH A NINTH GRADER THIS MORNING!

AUGH!

MIH—

SHUT YOUR YAP ALREADY.

S-STOP IT. STAY BACK...

A LINEAGE STAINED WITH BLOOD.

WHAT'S WRONG ?

M-MIHO ...

WAH HA HA HA HA HA!

AAAAH!

WHO DO YOU THINK I AM? I'M A DAUGHTER OF THE TODOH FAMILY.

YOU JUST NEVER SHUT UP, BOY!

TSUKASA! YOU CAN'T LIE AROUND. YOU HAVE EXAMS SOON!

TAKEUCHI

I KNOW, OKAY!

WHENEVER I THINK ABOUT HER, THOUGH, I REMEMBER THAT TIME TWO YEARS AGO. THE WAY SHE CHANGED...

AND THEN HER DAD.

I WONDER IF SHE LIKES SOMEONE ELSE.

MIHO NEVER SHOWED UP.

IT'S NOT JUST THAT, EITHER. THE SAME THING HAPPENED WITH EIICHI.

WHAT IS GOING ON WITH THAT FAMILY?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING THERE? COME INSIDE.

MIHO? SO YOU'RE HOME, THEN?

HOW LONG WILL THIS GO ON?

MOTHER... I HATE THIS...

ANOTHER HEAD-ACHE?

IT'S GETTING BETTER. I'M SURE THEY'LL GO AWAY WHEN YOU GROW UP.

MIHO, BE STRONG.

HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT?!

IT'S LIKE A VISE ON MY HEAD...

AND THEN I CAN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING AFTER THAT.

...WILL KILL YOU.

YOUR FATHER ...

...?!

WHY... WHY?!

IF YOU DON'T... YOU'LL...

MIHO, PLEASE. YOU HAVE TO BE STRONG.

COME TO THE LIVING ROOM.

MIHO, I NEED TO TALK TO YOU.

MIHO!

GASP

DON'T GET INVOLVED IN ANY SILLY DATING. YOU'RE STILL A CHILD.

MIHO, IT SEEMS YOU'VE GOT BOYS ALL OVER YOU LATELY.

THIS LOVE LETTER FROM THIS SMUG LITTLE KAYAMA BOY?

THEN WHAT'S THIS?

MIHO TODOH

SILLY DATING... I WOULD NEVER...!

MIHO! YOU BE GOOD AND OPEN YOUR HEART TO YOUR FATHER!

HOW COULD YOU!

HOW AWFUL! WHERE DID YOU GET THAT, FATHER?

MIHO!

LET'S SEE. "YOUR FREQUENCY IS 10,000 HERTZ. MY LONELY HEART IS A RECEIVER TUNED JUST TO YOU." HEH HEH... A MERE BOY...

WHEN SHE'S ALL GROWN UP, YES. ANYWAY, SACHIE, WHAT WAS IT YOU WANTED TO TALK ABOUT?

HONEY, MIHO'S LIFE IS HERS TO LIVE.

HE'S SO MEAN...

AAH... SHE'S GOTTEN TO BE A HANDFUL, TOO.

HONEY ...

GIVE ME A HEALTHY BABY. A BOY WOULD BE NICE THIS TIME.

OH... YOU ARE! THAT'S GREAT!

WELL, THE TRUTH IS...

...I'M PREGNANT.

WHAT?!

WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?

WHAT?

AND MIHO... WHAT WILL YOU DO ABOUT HER?

WHAT DO YOU WANT, HAVING ANOTHER CHILD?

YOU KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT AND MAKE MY DINNER.

SACHIE, YOU ARE MY WIFE.

GO ON TO BED ALREADY!

WHAT IS THIS NONSENSE ?!

YOU IDIOT!

...

AAH. FIRST HER AND NOW THIS.

SOME-THING'S... PUSHING INSIDE!

ANOTHER ONE!

AH!

THROB

IT HURTS!

FATHER... AH!

IT'S SO MUCH WORSE THAN USUAL!

AAH!

FATHER... FATHER... HELP ME...

AAAH!

AH!

HMPH!!

IT'S FATHER! HE'S FORCING HIS WAY INTO MY HEAD!

MIHO. OPEN YOUR HEART. WHY DO YOU REFUSE ME?

HMPH!

HMPH!

YES. JUST LIKE THAT. ACCEPT ME.

MIHO...

LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE PUSHED HIM!

WHY'D HE FALL?

HEY! YOU HEAR?

KAYAMA FROM CLASS E FELL DOWN THE STAIRS AND GOT HURT REALLY BAD.

WHAT?! HOLY SMOKES!

I WONDER WHO IT WAS?

WHOA! THAT'S SO MEAN!

THAT'S AWFUL!

TSUKASA.

YOU DON'T LOOK SO GOOD.

WHY'D YOU ASK ME TO MEET YOU?

WHAT'S UP, MIHO?

IT WAS ME. I KNOW IT WAS ME.

YOU HAVE TO HELP ME.

HUH?

NO, NOT ME. FATHER...

I JUST KNOW HE'S WATCHING ME! I FINALLY FIGURED IT OUT LAST NIGHT!

MY FATHER... MY FATHER'S TAKING OVER MY BODY AND MAKING ME DO WHATEVER HE WANTS.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? JUST CALM DOWN.

I WAS THE ONE WHO HURT KAYAMA.

IF THIS KEEPS UP, I MIGHT HURT SOMEONE AGAIN WITHOUT EVEN KNOWING IT.

MY MOM TOLD ME TO STAY STRONG, BUT I CAN'T.

I MEAN...HE'S GOING TO HAVE ANOTHER BABY. HE WON'T NEED ME ANYMORE.

I'M SURE MY FATHER'S GOING TO KILL ME.

MIHO! YOU HAVE TO CALM DOWN!

AAH!

WHEN MY BROTHERS STOPPED DOING WHAT OUR FATHER WANTED, HE KILLED THEM BECAUSE THEY WERE IN THE WAY.

MIHO!

IT'S FATHER!

MY HEAD!

MIHO!!

ARE YOU OKAY?

IS THAT WHAT MIHO SAID?!

D-DAMN HER!!

JUST CALM DOWN AND EXPLAIN IT TO ME AGAIN.

DID YOUR DAD DO SOMETHING TO YOU?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, HE TAKES YOU OVER?

NOW THAT IT'S COME TO THIS, I'LL HAVE TO...

...KILL YOU BOTH TO PROTECT MY SECRET.

MIHO ...?

HA HA HA! TSUKASA.

LOOK HOW BIG YOU'VE GOTTEN!

YES! I TOOK HER OVER.

SEEMS LIKE MIHO SPILLED EVERYTHING.

STOP!

DIE!

YOU CAN DIE IN TERROR !

WAH HA HA HA! YOU'RE AFRAID OF HEIGHTS, AREN'T YOU?

AH!

SHOVE

GET AWAY!

WAH HA HA HA HA!

I GET IT!

SO THAT'S IT...

PHEW.

TSUKASA.

SOB SOB!

...AND THE WEIRD WAY EIICHI DIED—ALL OF IT WAS HIM.

IF IT'S ALL BEEN YOUR DAD, THEN THAT TIME AT THE AMUSEMENT PARK...

I'LL PROTECT YOU.

DON'T WORRY, MIHO.

YOU'RE BACK?!

MIHO!

TSUKASA, HELP ME...

AAUGH.

TSUKASA! ARE YOU OKAY?!

EEEAAH!

THE NEXT TIME YOU HAVE A LITTLE RENDEZ-VOUS, I'LL KILL YOU!

HA HA HA! YOU LET YOUR GUARD DOWN. I HOPE YOU FAIL YOUR EXAMS!

AAAH! MIHO!

I hope it's not an act this time.

WE'RE ALL PACKED.

NO, FATHER'S NOT HOME RIGHT NOW.

YES, THIS IS THE TODOH RESIDENCE. TSUKASA?

A FEW DAYS LATER ...

RRRRRR-ZU RRRR-ZU

I'M LEAVING, MOTHER. WHAT ABOUT YOU?

KACHAK

BEFORE YOUR FATHER GETS HOME.

COME NOW. HURRY.

ALL RIGHT! I'LL COME WITH YOU. THAT WOULD BE BEST, WOULDN'T IT?

MIHO.

MIHO!

SACHIE! WHERE ARE YOU?!

WHERE ARE YOU?!

ANSWER ME!

DO YOU NOT REALIZE I'M HOME?!

I'M COMING FOR YOU!

THEY'RE AT TSUKASA'S!

YOU WENT AND DID IT! DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN RUN FROM ME?!

DAMMIT! THE TWO OF THEM PACKED UP AND LEFT!

ONCE YOU TALKED TO MY PARENTS, MRS. TODOH, THEY FINALLY UNDERSTOOD.

SO PLEASE GO. YOU HAVE TO GET AWAY FROM MR. TODOH.

MY AUNT IN HOKKAIDO WILL PUT YOU UP.

HER HOUSE IS PRETTY BIG, TOO. YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT TROUBLING HER!

MY AUNT'S ALL ON HER OWN, SO SHE'S HAPPY TO HAVE YOU.

TSUKASA... YOU'VE DONE SO MUCH FOR US EVER SINCE EIICHI. I THOUGHT IT WOULD JUST BE MIHO...

...BUT I'M VERY GLAD FOR YOUR HELP.

MR. TODOH'S POWERS SHOULDN'T REACH YOU IN HOKKAIDO.

THIS IS THE ADDRESS.

THERE'S HORSES. WE'LL HAVE FUN.

OF COURSE. I'LL COME VISIT ON SUMMER BREAK.

TSUKASA... WILL I SEE YOU AGAIN?

THIS IS GOODBYE, MIHO. TAKE CARE! WATCH OUT FOR YOUR MOM AND THE BABY.

MY PARENTS ARE AT THE STATION WITH TICKETS FOR YOU!

NOW! PLEASE GO BEFORE MR. TODOH COMES.

HE FIGURED IT OUT ALREADY!

MOTHER.

MIHO... WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

SACHIE! MIHO! GET OUT HERE!!

AH!

WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING RUNNING FROM ME?!

YOU'VE GOT NO REASON TO BE UNHAPPY!

BE GOOD AND COME OUT RIGHT NOW!

I KNOW YOU'RE HIDING IN THERE!

THE BACK DOOR'S ON THE RIGHT.

THUD THUD THUD THUD

IT'S THE SOUTH GATE AT THE STATION.

LEAVE HIM TO ME! YOU GO OUT THE BACK!

WHO DO YOU THINK'S BEEN PUTTING FOOD ON THE TABLE FOR YOU?! YOU'RE HERE BECAUSE I'VE WORKED MYSELF TO THE BONE SINCE I WAS A BOY!

YOU CAN GO TO HELL, YOU UNGRATEFUL WRETCHES!

AH!

YOUR SHOES!

WHAT CAN YOU DO WITHOUT ME?!

YOU DON'T KNOW THE FIRST THING ABOUT THE WORLD.

IT'S FOR YOUR OWN GOOD!

COME HOME NOW!

I'M NOT LETTING YOU THROUGH!

KLATTER

NOT IF I HAVE A SAY IN IT!

ARE YOU GOING TO RUN OUT THE BACK?!

OUT OF THE WAY!!

TSUKA-SA.

I'M NOT LETTING YOU TAKE A SINGLE STEP PAST ME.

GET OUT!

SOME-WHERE YOU CAN'T TOUCH THEM!

WHERE ARE YOU SENDING THEM?!

...A GROWN MAN LIKE THAT!

HOW DARE YOU TALK TO...

WHY YOU LITTLE—

MISERABLE BRAT!

STOP!

MIHO. I'M BRINGING YOU HOME.

WHAM

MIHO!

THROB

AH! AAAH!

MY HEAD!

HMPH!

HAAH HAAH

HAAH HAAH

LEAVE ME ALONE! I'M NOT YOUR DAUGHTER ANYMORE! I'M LIVING MY OWN LIFE!

DON'T INVADE MY HEAD!

NO! STOP!

PLEASE STOP THIS!

HONEY!

MIHO! HANG ON! WE HAVE TO RUN!

AAAAAAH!

MIHO!

AAAH!

STOP ...

MIHO! YOU'RE STAYING. COME BACK. YOU HAVE TO COME BACK.

HMPH

SACHIE. YOU TRAITOR.

KEH KEH KEH!

MIHO!

KEH!

KEH! KEH!

ARE YOU OKAY? DID IT STOP?

MIHO.

H-
HEY...
LET
GO!

UNGH!
HRK!

STOP,
MR.
TODOH!

YANK

LET GO! YOU HAVE TO LET GO. WHAT RIGHT DO YOU HAVE TO DESTROY SOMEONE ELSE'S FAMILY?!

DO YOU SEE HOW STRONG A *BRAT* CAN BE NOW?

AH!

MOM, IT'S ME!

NOW, WHILE WE STILL CAN...

THANK GOODNESS! YOU'RE BACK!

LET GO!

DAMN YOU!

WHY DO YOU TAKE CONTROL OF MIHO?!

TO SPY ON HER?! YOU'RE STEALING HER PRECIOUS TIME FOR THAT?

MIHO! MIHO! COME BACK! YOU HAVE TO COME BACK!

YOU'RE THE ONE DESTROYING YOUR FAMILY! YOU KILLED SATORU, YOU KILLED EIICHI... AND YOU TRIED TO KILL MIHO!

SHE'S LEAVING!

AAAAAH! SHE'S GOING TO LEAVE!

PLEASE... DON'T GO!

SACHIE !

YOU'RE RUINING HER BY TAKING HER OVER!

MIHO'S SUCH A KIND PERSON!

LET GO, DAMN YOU!

LET GO! LET GO...

SHUT YOUR TRAP! MIHO... MIHO'S GOING TO LEAVE!

PLEASE, MR. TODOH.

SACHIE...

ARE YOU REALLY LEAVING ...?

SHE'S HAD IT THE WORST OF ANYONE.

SHE CRIED AND ASKED US TO HELP MIHO.

GIVE UP, MR. TODOH! THINK ABOUT EVERYTHING YOU DID TO THEM!

MRS. TODOH CAME TO MY HOUSE BEFORE.

FINE... LET GO OF ME.

PLEASE!

YOU HAVE TO LET THEM GO!

I CAN'T REACH HER ANYMORE.

THEY'RE GONE.

MR. TODOH...

SHE CAN DO WHAT SHE WANTS.

GUESS THEY MANAGED IT AFTER ALL.

HEH HEH HEH. THEY LEFT...

I WON'T CHASE HER ANYMORE.

MIHO'S ALL GROWN UP NOW. TALKING LIKE AN ADULT.

TAKES ME BACK TO MY BOYHOOD. THE OLD DAYS.

I WORKED IN EXCHANGE FOR THEM FEEDING ME. I CAN'T REMEMBER EVER PLAYING. I EVEN FELT LIKE PLAY WAS A SIN.

MY MOTHER ABANDONED ME WHEN I WAS TOO SMALL TO REMEMBER HER. RELATIVES TOOK ME IN, AND I JUST KEPT MY HEAD DOWN AND WORKED NONSTOP.

IT'S FINALLY...

THE TIME'S FINALLY COME. I'M ALONE AGAIN.

I GOT ALL OF THE THINGS I'D NEVER HAD BEFORE.

BUT I LOST MY FAMILY IN EXCHANGE.

I NEVER INTENDED TO KILL MY CHILDREN.

WHEN MY SONS LEARNED THE TRUTH ABOUT ME, THEY REJECTED ME AND TOOK THEIR OWN LIVES.

BUT I LIVED PUSHING BACK THAT DESIRE TO PLAY. WHEN I GREW UP AND HAD KIDS, I STARTED TO BE ABLE TO LEAVE MY BODY.

I BORROWED THE CHILDREN'S BODIES AND LOST MYSELF IN PLAY.

I'M DONE. AND...

...I CAN'T TAKE OVER STRANG-ERS.

MR. TODOH... YOU CAN TAKE CONTROL OF ME.

...I DO HAVE JUST ONE MEMORY OF PLAYING. I FORGOT. A LONG TIME AGO... A LONG, LONG TIME AGO, BACK WHEN MY BROTHERS WERE STILL WITH ME, WE WENT ON A FERRIS WHEEL. FORGIVE ME. THAT WAS ENOUGH. SATORU... EIICHI...

AAH, NOW THAT I'M THINKING ABOUT IT...

AFTER WALKING AROUND FOR A WHILE...

...HE GOT ON THE FERRIS WHEEL.

THE NEXT DAY, A MAN WENT TO THE AMUSEMENT PARK ALONE.

DOOMF CHANG CHANG
DOOMF CHANG CHANG

DOOMF CHANG CHANG
DOOMF CHANG CHANG

BUT WHEN THE FERRIS WHEEL WAS APPROACHING ITS PEAK...

...HE SUDDENLY OPENED THE DOOR...

...AND NEVER CAME HOME AGAIN.

耐えがたい迷路

UNENDURABLE LABYRINTH

IRONICALLY, THOUGH, THIS MOUNTAIN WAS THE ONE PLACE I SHOULD NEVER HAVE GONE.

WHEN I STOPPED COMING TO SCHOOL, NORIKO WAS WORRIED, SO SHE INVITED ME ON A HIKE.

LET'S TAKE A BREAK.

SAYAKO.

I FIGURED THE MOUNTAINS WOULD BE OKAY, SO I SAID YES. I LIKED THE MOUNTAINS BETTER THAN THE BEACH, ANYWAY.

THANKS.

WANT SOME?

OKAY. SURE.

I DON'T CARE ABOUT THAT.

WAS IT MAYBE... HIROMI AND THEM SAYING MEAN STUFF?

NO REASON IN PARTICU-LAR.

SAYAKO, EVERYONE IN CLASS IS WORRIED ABOUT YOU. WHY'D YOU STOP COMING TO SCHOOL?

YOU DON'T LIKE BRAIDS?

IT'S JUST...IF IT'S LONG, THEN YOU HAVE TO BRAID IT FOR SCHOOL.

BUT YOU'VE BEEN DIFFERENT EVER SINCE THEN. YOU EVEN CUT YOUR HAIR.

I DID. COME BACK FOR THE SECOND TERM.

SO YOU ASKED ME TO GO HIKING TO CONVINCE ME TO COME BACK, NORIKO?

COME ON! YOU'RE SO STUBBORN.

I DUNNO.

HMM.

Map

SO?

WEIRD. I GUESS WE TOOK A WRONG TURN SOME-WHERE.

OH NO. ARE WE LOST?

WE'RE FINE. WE CLIMBED UP. SO IF WE HEAD DOWN, WE'LL GET BACK TO THE BOTTOM OF THE MOUNTAIN.

YOU THINK SO?

IT'S KIND OF CREEPY.

WE ENDED UP IN A STRANGE PLACE, HUH?

WAY OUT HERE IN THE MOUNTAINS ...

HEY, SAYAKO? LOOK AT THAT.

ASCETIC MONKS, MAYBE?

HELLO!

UMM.

COULD I ASK YOU SOMETHING?

EXCUSE ME!

UH, UM...

UGH.
THAT WAS
WEIRD.

IT'S
ALREADY
4:30.

WHAT
SHOULD
WE DO,
NORIKO?

I DON'T
WANT TO
SLEEP
OUTSIDE.

THIS
SUCKS.

HOW
ABOUT
WE WALK
A BIT
MORE?

WHO WHO WHO WHO

WHDWHDWHD

WHDWHDWHDWHDWHDWHD

WHDWHDWHD

THOSE ARE BELIEVERS PRACTICING THEIR ASCETICISM.

WOOOOOOZ

WOOOOOOZ

WOOOOOOZ

WOOOOON

WOOOON

EEEP!

IT'S NO WONDER. THIS AREA IS A SACRED SPACE, CLOSED OFF FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD.

ARE THE TWO OF YOU LOST?

AND IT'S DIFFICULT TO LEAVE.

NOT TOO MANY MAKE IT HERE.

...

COME STAY AT OUR TEMPLE TONIGHT.

YOU CAN'T LEAVE THE MOUNTAIN NOW.

PEOPLE LIKE YOU...

...DO OCCASIONALLY WANDER IN.

OUR HISTORY IS NOT SO SHORT AS TO BE REFERRED TO AS A NEW RELIGION.

SO THEN IT'S A NEW RELIGION?

WE FOLLOW *MIKKYO* PRACTICES, BUT HAVE AN INDEPENDENT DOCTRINE.

WHAT SECT OF BUDDHISM IS THIS TEMPLE?

*FUMEI-KYO TEMPLE

TAKE A LOOK.

THOSE WITH MENTAL ILLNESSES COME TO RECUPERATE. IF YOU MEDITATE INTENSIVELY HERE, YOU WILL FIND HEALTH.

THESE PEOPLE ARE NOT BELIEVERS.

...WHY DON'T YOU TRY *ZAZEN* MEDITATION FOR A FEW DAYS?

WHAT? BUT...

SINCE YOU'VE COME ALL THIS WAY...

I ASSUME YOU'RE STUDENTS?

THAT'S ALL RIGHT. WHAT DO YOU THINK?

WE'RE BOTH IN GREAT HEALTH, SO...

NORIKO.

SO LIKE... MAYBE WE COULD TRY IT? IT'S SUMMER BREAK, ANYWAY.

SAYAKO...

THE NEXT MORNING, THEY WOKE US UP AT THREE, AND WE STARTED ZAZEN PRACTICE.

A STATE OF NOTHING, BECOME NOTHING.

SO, LIKE, SAYAKO'S SO LUCKY, HUH? SHE'S PRETTY AND SHE GETS GOOD GRADES.

YEAH. BUT...

WHAT, KAZUMI?

HEY, HIROMI?

C'MON, HIROMI!

AM I ACTUALLY NOT NICE?

EVER SINCE, I'VE BEEN CONSCIOUS OF OTHER PEOPLE'S EYES.

DOES THAT REALLY SHOW ON MY FACE? I TRIED IN MY HEART TO UNDERSTAND.

IT ALL STARTED WITH THOSE THINGS HIROMI SAID.

I ONLY ACTUALLY HEARD HER SAY ANYTHING BAD THAT ONE TIME.

BUT SHE HAS A TERRIBLE PERSONALITY.

I JUST GET THAT FEELING LOOKING AT HER FACE, Y'KNOW.

BUT IT WAS AN UNNATURAL EFFORT. I GREW MORE AND MORE AWARE OF OTHER PEOPLE'S EYES.

THEY'RE LOOKING AT ME. EVERYONE'S LOOKING AT ME. DON'T LOOK AT ME. STOP IT...

PHEW. I'M AWAKE NOW.

WHAP

THANKS.

I'M AYA KURAMOTO. I'VE BEEN HERE TWO MONTHS NOW.

SO YOU'RE NEW, HUH? YOU'LL BE SHARING A ROOM WITH ME.

I ACTUALLY CAME LOOKING FOR MY BROTHER.

THAT'S WHAT I SAY, ANYWAY.

ME? OH, I CAME TO GET OVER MY FEAR OF PEOPLE.

SO WHY ARE YOU TRAINING, KURAMOTO?

WHOA! I THOUGHT I'D CRASH AFTER JUST TODAY.

I CHECKED HIS DIARY, AND I FOUND OUT THAT HE'D COME TO JOIN THIS GROUP.

HE DISAPPEARED FIVE YEARS AGO.

I WAS SURE HE'D BE AT THE TEMPLE HERE, SO I PRETENDED TO WANT TO TRAIN AND CAME LOOKING FOR HIM. BUT I HAVEN'T FOUND HIM.

YOUR BROTHER?

WHERE'D SHE RUN OFF TO?

HUH?

LET'S LEAVE THE MOUNTAIN TOMOR-ROW, OKAY?

HEY, SAYAKO ?

FSH FSH

IF YOU CUT LOOSE THAT CONFU-SION, THEN PEACE WILL COME TO YOU.

THAT CONFU-SION IS PAIN.

TO LEAVE THE MOUNTAIN AND RETURN TO THE SECULAR WORLD—THE WORLD OF THE LOST—IS TO SINK INTO CONFUSION.

IT LOOKS AS THOUGH YOU ARE SUFFERING FROM DISCORD IN YOUR HEART.

PLEASE LET ME THINK IT OVER.

OF COURSE.

FUMEI-KYO WILL SAVE NOT ONLY YOU...

...BUT ALL OF HUMANITY AT SOME POINT.

JOIN OUR GROUP. THEN YOU WILL NEVER BE LOST AGAIN.

IT'S FINALLY TONIGHT, HM?

...

SHK SHK

MAKES ME FEEL SO POWERFUL.

AT ANY RATE, IT ONLY HAPPENS ONCE EVERY THREE YEARS. A HUNDRED PEOPLE BECOMING BUDDHAS ALL AT ONCE.

ENTERING NIRVANA IS OUR ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE, AFTER ALL.

WE HAVE TO BUILD ON OUR PRACTICE SO WE CAN BE READY SOON, TOO.

WOOOOON WOOOON

THE CHANTING OF A HUNDRED PEOPLE IN THE CENTRAL HALL.

THE END OF THEIR TRAINING.

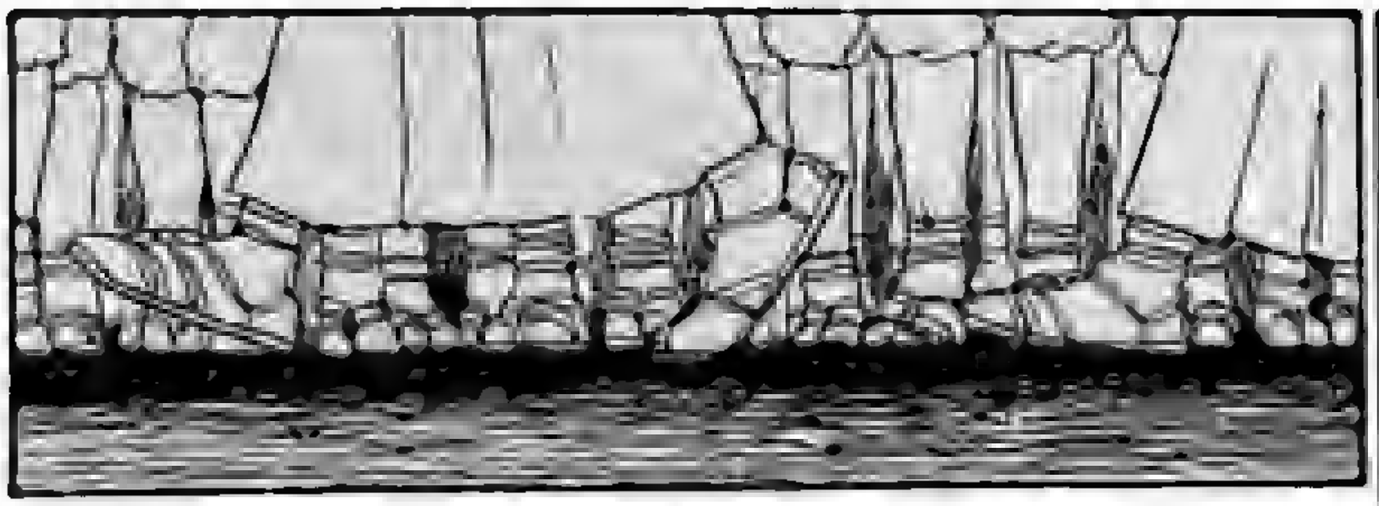
WOOOOON WOOOON

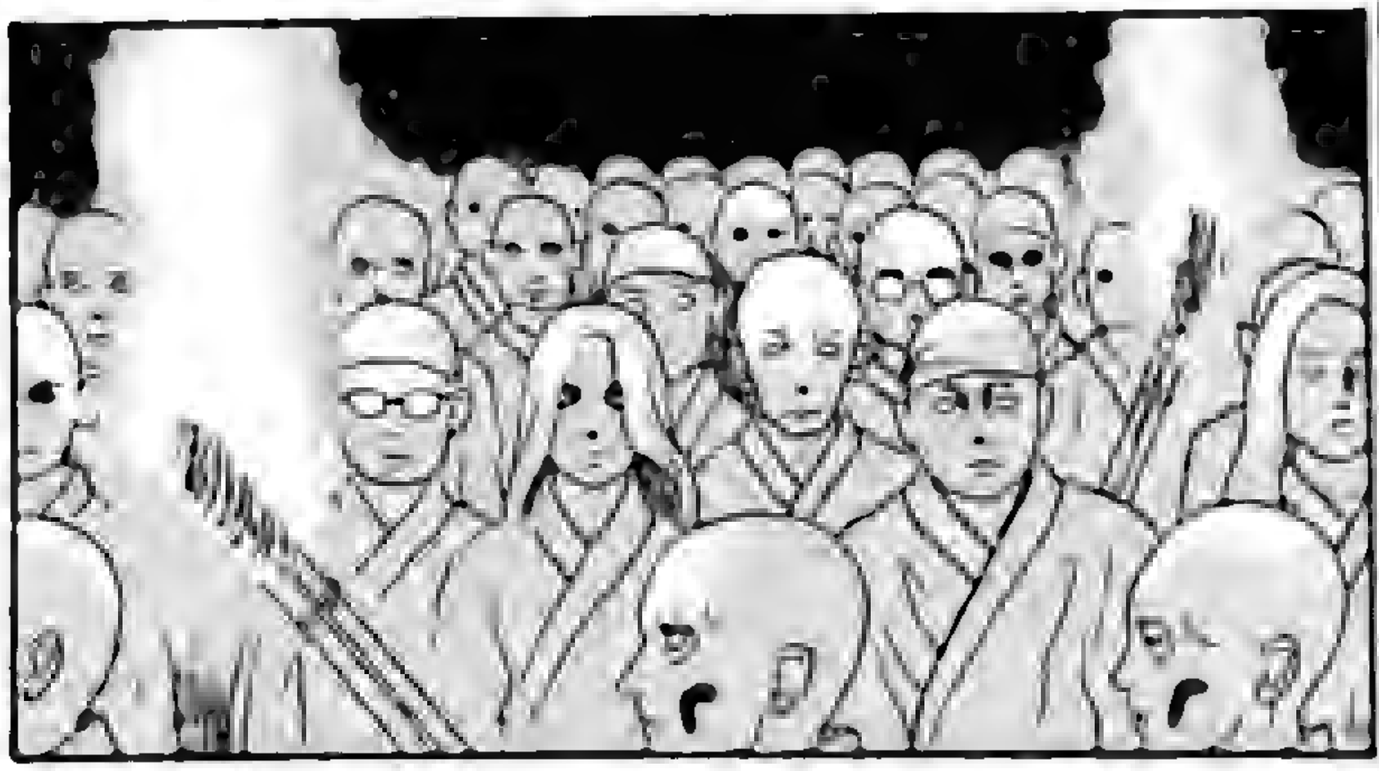
HEAR THAT?

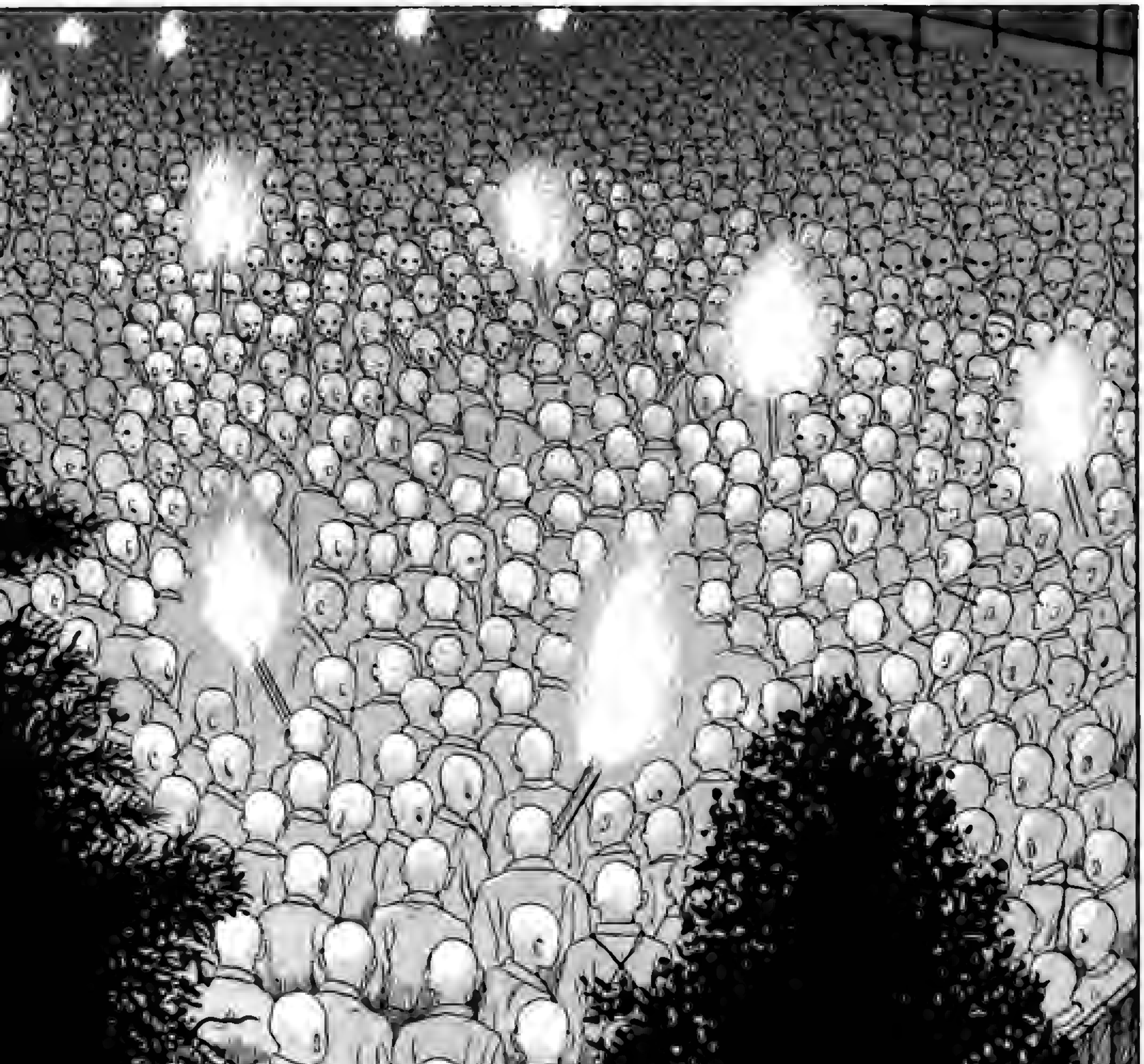
THEY SAY THAT YOU'RE ASSAULTED BY VISIONS BEFORE YOU BECOME A BUDDHA.

I HEARD IT'S PRETTY TOUGH.

WOOO







MUMMIES ?

HEY, DO YOU KNOW ABOUT BUDDHIST MUMMIES?

IT REALLY IS JUST LIKE YOU SAID, HUH?

OH! I'VE HEARD OF THAT. THE MONK GETS INTO A COFFIN IN THE GROUND AND SITS THERE, RINGING HIS BELLS. WHEN HE DIES, HE TURNS INTO A MUMMY.

SO WHAT ABOUT IT?

YOU NEVER HEARD OF THEM? WHAT ABOUT *SOKUSHINBUTSU*? IT'S A KIND OF BUDDHIST MUMMY. IT'S WHEN A MONK MUMMIFIES HIMSELF WHILE HE'S STILL ALIVE.

THEY CALL GOING INTO THAT COFFIN BECOMING A BUDDHA, TOO.

...MUST BE TORTURE BEFORE YOU DO.

AND THOSE BELIEVERS ARE WAY TOO SKINNY TO JUST BE FASTING.

OH. IT JUST POPPED INTO MY HEAD WHEN SAYAKO WAS TALKING BEFORE.

THAT WHOLE "BECOMING A BUDDHA" THING...

HUH? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

LOOK. THEY'RE HEADING OUT SOME-WHERE.

YOU'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO ESCAPE IF YOU DON'T DO SOMETHING. THEY SAY WE'RE HERE FOR MENTAL HEALTH, BUT THE TRUTH IS THEY PLAN TO TURN US INTO BELIEVERS.

YOU GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE QUICK, TOO.

I'M FOLLOWING THEM.

MAYBE MY BROTHER'S WHEREVER THEY'RE GOING.

AH! WAIT! WE'LL COME, TOO.

THAT WARNING GOES DOUBLE FOR YOU, SAYAKO !

WHAT? WE'RE NOT ALLOWED OUT AT NIGHT, THOUGH!

WE'LL GO AROUND THE BACK.

THIS IS THE ONLY WAY.

WHAT? HEY! WHAT IF WE GET BIT BY SNAKES?

KUH KUH

CRAP! THERE'S NO PATH.

HON-
ESTLY
...

KSH
KSH
KSH

I'M
GOING!

YOU DO
WHAT
YOU
WANT.

THEY'VE
ALREADY
GONE SO
FAR.

LEAVE
THEM
BE.

IT
LOOKS
LIKE
THREE
OF THE
TRAINEES
HAVE
RUN
AWAY.

...

THEY HAVE
CHOSEN TO
LIVE THEIR
LIVES IN
CONFUSION
IN THE
SECULAR
WORLD.

WHD

WHD

WHD

WHD

WE'VE TOTALLY LOST THEM...

WHD

OH! THERE'S A PILE OF THEM THERE!

THEY EXTIN-GUISHED THEM OUT HERE.

LOOK!

THERE'S A DOOR BEHIND THE BUDDHA STATUE!

I'M PRETTY SURE THEIR TORCHES DISAPPEARED AROUND HERE.

I'M GOING IN!

I TOLD YOU, YOU DO WHAT YOU WANT!

KREEEEE

OH! IT'S OPEN!

WAIT... ARE WE GOING IN THERE?

IT'S SLOWLY GETTING NARROWER, TOO.

IT'S COLD.

I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG WE WALKED.

WHEN WE WENT DOWN THE STAIRS, THERE WAS A NARROW CORRIDOR THAT SEEMED TO STRETCH OUT AHEAD FOREVER.

WITH NO OTHER CHOICE, WE FOLLOWED KURAMOTO.

WHAT?

HEY. WHAT'S THAT?

THAT.

?!

EEEE

I KNEW IT. THESE MUMMIES LOOK PRETTY OLD, BUT THEY'RE DEFINITELY BELIEVERS.

ROWS OF BUDDHIST MUMMIES STRETCHED OUT FOR WHAT LOOKED LIKE INFINITY ON BOTH SIDES OF THE NARROW HALL.

BUT TO BE MUMMIFIED STANDING UP, THAT'S NO ORDINARY ASCETICISM.

THIS CEREMONY'S PROBABLY BEEN PERFORMED FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS. THERE ARE SO MANY OF THEM...

H-HEY, KURAMOTO, LET'S GO BACK.

DYING ON THEIR FEET, STANDING BUDDHAS... BUT I WONDER WHY THEY HAVE TO BECOME SOKUSHINBUTSU IN A GROUP.

NORIKO AND I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO FOLLOW KURAMOTO.

NO! MY BROTHER MIGHT BE HERE!

A TERRIFYING UNDER-GROUND MAZE FULL OF MUMMIES.

WE'RE STUCK NOW.

THIS CORRIDOR'S TURNING INTO A LABYRINTH.

I FINALLY FOUND YOU.

NO... WHY DID YOU END UP LIKE THIS?

AH! IT'S MY BROTHER!

AND THEN ...

THE MUMMIES WERE NEWER AS WE MOVED FORWARD.

GO! I NEED TO BE ALONE!

B-BUT...

YOU TWO GO ON AHEAD.

NORIKO, SAYAKO. I'M GOING TO STAY HERE FOR A BIT.

BUT I DON'T KNOW IF WE CAN.

I WANT TO GET OUT OF HERE, TOO.

THIS PLACE IS NO JOKE.

I CAN'T STAND IT ANYMORE.

NORIKO... LET'S JUST GET OUT OF HERE ALREADY.

SAYAKO ...

WE WALKED A REALLY LONG WAY, DIDN'T WE?

CAN WE MAKE IT BACK, SAYAKO?

HONESTLY... HOW LONG DOES THIS GO ON FOR?

DID THEY TURN THE WHOLE MOUNTAIN INTO THIS...THIS UNDERGROUND MAZE?

IT WAS ACTUALLY A MIRACLE THAT WE FOUND A WAY TO KEEP GOING FORWARD.

WE WERE COMPLETELY LOST!

HAAH!
HAAH!

IT'S SO COLD!

NORIKO...

SAYAKO!

HELP ME... I CAN'T STAND IT.

NORIKO!

I'M AFRAID OF PEOPLE'S GAZES!

I... I'M AFRAID OF EYES.

NORIKO... LISTEN.

YOU CAN'T GIVE UP HERE!

YOU HAVE TO KEEP GOING!

EVERYONE'S ALWAYS STARING AT ME.

SAYAKO, WHAT'S WRONG? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!

EVERY-ONE AT SCHOOL ...

...AND THE PEOPLE I PASS ON THE STREET!

PUNISHED. I MEAN, I'M SUCH AN AWFUL PERSON...

FOR LEAVING KURAMOTO BY HERSELF.

WE'RE BEING PUNISHED, I JUST KNOW IT.

SEE? TAKE A LOOK.

DON'T BE SILLY. HOW COULD MUMMIES BE LOOKING?

NORIKO, I CAN FEEL THE MUMMIES' GAZES!

SAYA-KO.

IT'S ALL IN YOUR HEAD.

EEEEEEE!

LIVING GAZES.

THE CURIOUS GAZES OF THE BELIEVERS WHO HAD JUST ENTERED.

EEEEAAH!

AT SOME POINT, WE HAD WANDERED INTO THE MOST TERRIFYING AREA.

DON'T LOOK AT ME!

DID THEY THINK WE WERE A VISION?

DON'T LOOK AT ME... DON'T...

UNENDURABLE LABYRINTH/END

VILLAGE OF THE SIREN

村の警笛

FATHER, STEP ASIDE.

HAIYAMA... WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING TO DO?

I SAID, OUT OF THE WAY!

AH!

I CAN'T LET YOU DO THAT!

OBVIOUSLY, I'M GOING TO FREE THE PRISONER IN THE CHURCH BASEMENT.

HAI-YAMA!

HAIYAMA! STOP! YOU HAVE TO STOP!

CRAUT

STOP THIS! WOULD YOU DESTROY THE VILLAGE OF SHIROBE?!

KRRK

MAYOR YAMAUCHI WILL OBVIOUSLY BE RE-ELECTED.

AS IF WE WOULD ELECT A MERE BOY LIKE YOU!

CALL ME MAYOR HAIYAMA.

IS THAT HOW YOU TALK TO THE NEW MAYOR?

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?!

AND IF YAMAUCHI WERE TO FALL ILL?

I'VE BEEN CONTINUALLY REBORN FOR THE LAST 400 YEARS.

PUTTING A CURSE ON YAMAUCHI IS NOTHING TO ME.

I'M THE REINCAR-NATION OF THE MAGICIAN DOLEMAN.

FOOL! YOU'RE NOT A REINCAR-NATED ANYTHING.

I CAN'T LET YOU DO THIS! YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED IN THIS PLACE!

YOU MUSTN'T GO DOWN THERE!

AAAAAAH!!

WHUH WHUH WHUH

THUNK

AH!

HA HA HA HA!

HEH HEH HEH.

YOU SHALL BE THE FIRST SACRIFICE, FATHER SAITO.

N CITY...

TWO MONTHS LATER.

WHO'S IT FROM...?

OOH! A POST-CARD.

301

201

202

204

101

102

ZZT

302

HUH. IT'S FROM MOM.

THREE HUNDRED!

ADDING THESE NEW ABDUCTIONS TO THOSE FROM LAST NIGHT, THERE ARE NOW MORE THAN 300 MISSING INFANTS...

WE ARE SEEING REPORTS TONIGHT OF ANOTHER WAVE OF THE INFANT ABDUCTIONS THAT HAVE ROCKED THE COUNTRY RECENTLY.

THIS UNPRECEDENTED AND INCOMPREHENSIBLE SPATE OF ABDUCTIONS HAS LEFT FAMILIES ALL OVER THE COUNTRY WORRIED THAT THEIR INFANT MIGHT BE NEXT.

MOM DOESN'T USUALLY SEND ME LETTERS.

POLICE ARE STILL INVESTIGATING, BUT GIVEN THAT THE INCIDENTS ALWAYS OOCUR IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT, THEY HAVE NO LEADS.

I'M GOING TO GIVE HER A CALL.

DID THEY QUIT FARMING WITHOUT EVEN TALKING TO ME ABOUT IT?

WHAT KIND OF FACTORY WAS BUILT IN THAT COUNTRYSIDE TOWN?

WAIT, WHAT? "THEY BUILT A NEW FACTORY IN THE VILLAGE"?

WE HAVE A FARM, THOUGH. WEIRD.

"DAD'S STARTED WORKING AT THE PLANT, TOO. HE HEADS OUT EVERY DAY, FULL OF VIM AND VIGOR. MAYBE YOU COULD COME BACK TO THE VILLAGE AND WORK THERE TOO?"

KACHAK

NO ANSWER. I GUESS THEY WENT OUT.

...

I HAVE TO GET UP EARLY FOR WORK.

AAAH, IT'S ALREADY THREE. I NEED TO GO TO SLEEP.

I COULDN'T GET TO SLEEP THAT NIGHT.

FLAP FLAP

HM?

WHAT WAS THAT NOISE...?

FLAP FLAP

WAH!

FWSH

WHAT WAS THAT?!

KLAK

...I FELT LIKE MOM WAS PEEKING IN.

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE. THERE'S NO WAY. BUT...

THIS IS TOO HIGH UP FOR ANYONE TO BE HERE.

MAYBE IT WAS MY IMAGINA-TION.

VRRR

SHIRO-BE... HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN?

OH! SHOKO!

SURE, SIT.

IT'S ME. SHOKO. CAN I SIT HERE?

KYOICHI? IS THAT YOU?

YES. I QUIT MY JOB. MY DAD'S SICK, SO I DECIDED TO COME BACK.

UNTIL YESTER-DAY?

WHAT? THE MAYOR'S SICK?

I'M WORKING IN N CITY. I HEARD YOU WERE IN TOKYO?

HOW MANY YEARS HAS IT BEEN? YOU LOOK GOOD. WHAT ARE YOU UP TO NOW?

UNTIL YESTER-DAY.

SO I DECIDED TO COME BACK.

BUT HE'S STILL NOT ANY BETTER.

IT TURNED OUT TO BE OVERWORK, SO I FELT OKAY GOING BACK TO TOKYO AFTER A FEW DAYS.

HE'S NOT MAYOR ANYMORE. HE COLLAPSED A COUPLE MONTHS AGO IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ELECTION.

THERE'S ONLY TWO BUSES A DAY, AND ALL THE YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE LEFT TOWN, SO IT'S ONLY THE ELDERLY.

I GET THAT.

PLUS THERE'S NO DOCTOR OUT HERE IN THE BOONIES. I WORRY, Y'KNOW?

HAIYAMA.

AND GUESS WHO THIS MAYOR IS?

ANYWAY, I GUESS THERE HAVE BEEN SOME CHANGES. THE NEW MAYOR LURED IN A FACTORY TO REVITALIZE THE TOWN, AND THE VILLAGERS ARE REALLY BEHIND HIM.

THAT JERK?

WHAT?! HAIYAMA?!

VRMVRM

HE'S SUCH A WEIRDO, ALWAYS TALKING ABOUT HOW HE'S SOME REINCARNATED MAGICIAN.

AND HE'S STILL NOT EVEN 30.

SHIROBE

IT'S LIKE... THEY DOWNSIZED OR SOMETHING.

MAYBE IT'S JUST ME, BUT...

IT DOES.

VRRRRR

THE VILLAGE FEELS DIFFERENT SOMEHOW.

I GUESS THIS IS WHAT DEPOPULATING LOOKS LIKE.

SEE YOU LATER.

WELL, THIS IS ME, KYOICHI.

WHAT THE...? OUR FIELDS ARE COMPLETELY OVERGROWN.

WE HAVE THE FACTORY NOW.

MM-HMM. WE STOPPED FARMING.

UH-HUH ...

WHAT HAPPENED WITH THE FIELDS? THEY'RE A DISASTER.

I DID, BUT NO ONE ANSWERED.

HI, MOM.

YOU SHOULD'VE CALLED IF YOU WERE COMING BACK.

OH MY, KYOICHI! YOU'RE HOME?

I'M JUST GOING FOR A WALK.

MOM SEEMED WEIRD.

TAKE CARE THEN.

OH, YOU ARE?

I HEADED FOR THE HOUSE OF MY CHILDHOOD FRIEND, YUKARI.

BUT THAT'S YUKARI'S BIKE. SO SHE MUST BE HERE.

...

HUH. I GUESS NO ONE'S HOME.

I GUESS I'LL GO IN THE BACK.

SHE USED TO CLIMB IT ALL THE TIME, TOO.

I ALWAYS USED TO CLIMB THAT TREE TO YUKARI'S ROOM.

HEY, SHE IS HOME.

HUH?

BOOKS ON THE OCCULT. SHE'S STILL READING THAT STUFF?

HER ROOM'S A MESS.

KNOCK KNOCK

HEY, YUKARI... YUKARI!

IT'S ME. KYOICHI.

YUKARI! OPEN THE WINDOW. CAN'T YOU HEAR ME?!

THE PEOPLE I DID PASS WERE DEFINITELY OFF.

HELLO.

...IN THIS VILLAGE?

WEIRD. WHAT'S GOING ON...

THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY, AND BASICALLY NO ONE OUT.

KYOICHI.

SHOKO, IS THAT YOU?

HM?

COME WITH ME A MINUTE?

HOW'S YOUR DAD?

THEY WERE GOOD FRIENDS, SO DAD'S WORRIED. AND WHEN I GOT HERE...

MY DAD WANTED ME TO GO CHECK ON THE CHURCH. HE HASN'T HEARD FROM THE PRIEST SINCE HE GOT SICK.

THE CHURCH.

COME? WHERE?

AH! THE CHURCH!

LOOK!

KYOICHI, MY DAD CAN'T EVEN GET OUT OF BED.

THAT'S STRANGE, ISN'T IT?! THE DOCTOR SAID IT WAS JUST OVERWORK!

I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM.

SO... THE PRIEST?

SHE'S... THAT'S YUKARI OVER THERE.

AND SHE WAS CROUCHED IN A CORNER OF HER ROOM. NO RESPONSE AT ALL!

LIKE, I WENT TO YUKARI TANIMIYA'S BEFORE.

EVERYTHING IS WEIRD. SOMETHING'S GOING ON.

OH!

YUKARI!

YUKARI!

HEY! YUKARI!

YUKARI.

KYOICHI...

HM?

YUKARI?

WHAT?!

SHE... SHE CAN'T HEAR!

THERE'S DRIED BLOOD IN HER EAR.

YUKARI?!

YOU SHOULD TOO, KYOICHI, AND FAST.

WHY WOULD YOU...

OTHER-WISE, THE SIREN...

MY EARS? I DID THAT.

I JAMMED AN EAR PICK IN THEM. SO I'M OKAY NOW.

YUKARI, WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR EARS?

THE SIREN IS GOING TO GO OFF!

AAAH, IT'S ALREADY DUSK.

MY MOM AND DAD... THEY WERE EATEN.

I SAW IT.

SIREN ...?

H-HEY, YUKARI!

I'M GOING HOME!

YUKARI!

MY MOM'S OFF, TOO. SHE DIDN'T USED TO BE LIKE THAT.

YOU AND DAD ARE THE ONLY SANE ONES. EVERYONE ELSE IS WEIRD.

I FEEL LIKE I'M LOSING MY MIND.

KYOICHI ...

EVERYTHING'S BEEN SO STRANGE SINCE WE GOT HERE.

AND... MY DAD.

MY MOM WAS WEIRD, TOO.

FLAP FLAP FLAP

HE DID.

I KNOW I LEFT FOR THE CITY, SO I DON'T HAVE THE RIGHT TO SAY ANYTHING, BUT...

BUT ...

I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM YET.

HE STARTED AT THE NEW FACTORY?

HE POURED HIS HEART INTO THE FARM. AND HE GAVE IT UP, JUST LIKE THAT.

FLAP FLAP FLAP

IT SURE IS BIG FOR A BAT. ACTUALLY, IT'S WAY TOO BIG.

WHAT IS IT? LET'S GO AFTER IT.

LOOK AT THAT.

SHOKO.

IF YOU WANT TO CHASE IT, GO AHEAD! I'M LEAVING.

SOME-THING'S WRONG WITH THIS TOWN. I... I'M GOING HOME.

I JUST CAN'T!

NO!

FLAP FLAP FLAP

I JUST CAN'T!

IT KIND OF LOOKS LIKE A PTEROSAUR FROM THE DINOSAUR AGE.

HOW FAR IS IT GOING TO GO?

LIKE ONE OF THOSE WESTERN DEMONS IN YUKARI'S BOOKS!

BUT ACTUALLY, IT LOOKS MORE LIKE A DEMON.

AH!

WHAT IS *THAT?!*

SHOKO, YOU GET ON THE BUS OUT OF TOWN TOMORROW. YOU CAN'T STAY HERE.

THAT SO... FATHER SAITO WASN'T THERE?

DAD.

THE SEAL IN THE BASEMENT?

ACCORDING TO THE OLD CHURCH RECORDS, ABOUT 400 YEARS AGO, A MAGICIAN CALLED DOLEMAN CAME TO THIS VILLAGE WITH A GROUP OF MISSIONARIES.

HE'S LIKELY THE ONE WHO BURNED THE CHURCH DOWN. HE COULD HAVE BROKEN THE SEAL IN THE BASEMENT.

THINGS HAVE BEEN ODD EVER SINCE HAIYAMA BECAME MAYOR.

UNABLE TO ENDURE IT ANY LONGER, THE PEOPLE GOT HELP FROM THE MISSIONARIES TO DEFEAT DOLEMAN AND DESTROY TWO OF THE DEMONS. THEY LOCKED THE LAST ONE UP IN THE CHURCH BASEMENT.

THIS DOLEMAN USED BLACK MAGIC TO SUMMON THREE DEMONS TO WORK EVIL FOR HIM.

THEY SET HOUSES ON FIRE, ATE PEOPLE, AND CONTROLLED THE VILLAGERS WITH THEIR TERRIFYING VOICES.

AT THE FACTORY. IT GOES OFF EVERY NIGHT AT THIS TIME!

SIREN... WHAT SIREN?!

YOU MUSTN'T LISTEN TO IT. IT'S THE DEMON'S SIREN.

SHOKO, IT'S ALMOST THE TIME FOR THE SIREN. YOU HAVE TO STOP YOURSELF FROM HEARING IT. PLUG YOUR EARS AND SHOUT OUT LOUD!

IF THAT SEAL WAS BROKEN... THE TRAGEDY OF 400 YEARS AGO IS UNFOLDING ONCE MORE.

IN FACT, IT MIGHT ALREADY BE TOO LATE!

I CAN'T MOVE. I'M A WRECK... IT'S BECAUSE OF THAT SIREN.

WHAT ABOUT YOU, DAD?

WHY?

YOU'LL BE OKAY IF YOU ONLY HEAR IT THE ONCE. BUT THEN YOU GET ON THAT BUS IN THE MORNING! TAKE YOUR MOTHER WITH YOU!

HURRY! PLUG YOUR EARS!

SO THAT SIREN IS THE REASON MOM AND THE OTHERS ARE SO WEIRD?!

MOST OF THE VILLAGERS HAVE HAD THEIR MINDS INVADED. I'VE ENDURED THANKS TO MY FAITH.

BUT IT'S LEFT ME UNABLE TO MOVE...

UUU

RRRRRRRRRR

UUUU

UUUURRRRRRRR

RRRRRRRRRRRR

RRRRRRR

AAH!

AAAH!

RRRRRRRRRR

UUUUUUUUUUURRRRRRRRRRRR

UUUUUUURRRRRRR

MOM! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?!

RRRRRRRRRRR

TAKOUT

RRRRR

UUUUU

UUUURRRRRRRRR

DEAD END

UUURRRRRRRR

RRRR RRRRRR

RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR

SHIT. I CAN BARELY MOVE.

I HAVE TO GET HOME.

HNGH ...

RIGHT. THE SIREN... WHAT AN AWFUL SOUND. MAKES ME NAUSEOUS.

MY HEAD'S POUND-ING.

HUH? IT'S ALREADY NIGHT.

IS THIS THE FACTORY?

WHAT ARE THEY DOING?

LORD DOLEMAN, WHAT DO YOU THINK? THE MEN OF THE VILLAGE HAVE WORKED HARD DIGGING THIS HOLE. I BELIEVE IT IS NOW LARGE ENOUGH.

WHAT'S HIS GAME?

OH! THAT'S... HAIYAMA.

WAAH WAAH

!

THIS IS SUFFICIENT. THE CEREMONY WILL TAKE PLACE TOMORROW NIGHT.

YES. GIVEN THAT ALL THE DIGGERS ARE ANCIENT, IT'S RATHER MAGNIFI-CENT.

WAAH

WAAH

WAAAH
WAAH

A BABY !

WAAH

WAAH

THESE BABIES... THERE'S NO WAY THERE'S THIS MANY IN THE VILLAGE.

WAAH

THESE ARE ALL OLD WOMEN FROM TOWN.

WAIT. THAT'S HAPPENING ALL OVER JAPAN, THOUGH. TOO FAR AWAY FOR PEOPLE FROM THIS VILLAGE TO REACH.

IS THIS CONNECTED TO ALL THOSE BABY ABDUCTIONS?

MY MOTHER WAS AMONG THEM.

VILLAGE WOMEN CARRYING BABIES APPEARED ONE AFTER THE OTHER AND ENTERED THE GROUNDS OF THE STRANGE TOWER.

SO THEN WHERE ON EARTH...

THAT THE PEOPLE OF THE VILLAGE WOULD DO SOMETHING SO HORRIBLE... THAT MY MOTHER WOULD...

THE CRIES OF THOSE INNOCENT BABIES STOPPED.

I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED NEXT.

PLP PLP PLP

NOOO! LORD DOLE-MAN!

HA HA HA HA HA HA!

OFFER HER TO *HIM*.

I'M NOT INTER-ESTED IN EXCUSES.

P-PLEASE FORGIVE ME. FAMILIES ARE...ON GUARD NOW.

SO YOU'RE THE ONE WHO DIDN'T BRING A SACRIFICE?

AAAAAH!

KRRRNCH

EEE!

FORGIVE ME!

LORD DOLEMAN, I SAW THE FORMER MAYOR'S DAUGHTER YESTERDAY.

ANY IDEAS?

WE NEED A BEAUTIFUL VILLAGE GIRL TO OFFER AS A SACRIFICE.

TOMORROW NIGHT, WE WILL PERFORM THE RITUAL TO SUMMON THE DEVIL.

A SACRIFICE ?!

BRING HER HERE TOMOR-ROW.

YOU MEAN SHOKO. EXCEL-LENT.

SHOKO'S IN DANGER.

YES, SIR!

IT'S LIKE MY BODY'S NOT MINE ANYMORE.

DAMMIT. MY BODY'S ...

I HAVE TO TELL HER.

THAT SIREN... IS IT POISONOUS ?!

THUD

AH!

I FELL ANY NUMBER OF TIMES, SO THAT IT WAS ALMOST DAWN WHEN I FINALLY REACHED SHOKO'S HOUSE.

HAIYAMA... HE DROVE THEM MAD.

ANYWAY, THEY'RE MAD. THE VILLAGERS HAVE GONE MAD.

EVEN MOM. I CAN'T BELIEVE SHE'D DO SOMETHING SO AWFUL.

KYOICHI ...

SHOKO-!

SHOKO!

SHOKO!

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE MAYOR?!

KYOICHI, MY FATHER IS...

BUT LAST NIGHT, HE EXHAUST-ED HIS STRENGTH.

HE GAVE UP HIS LIFE RATHER THAN BECOME A SERVANT OF THE DEMON.

HE'S BEEN FIGHTING THE SOUND OF THE SIREN EVERY NIGHT.

MR. YAMAUCHI!

SIR!

I HAD RECOVERED A FAIR BIT, BUT SHOKO WAS STILL HALF-PARALYZED.

THE SUN WAS ALREADY HIGH IN THE SKY WHEN WE LEFT HER HOUSE.

THIS VILLAGE BELONGS TO THE DEMON.

IS MY FAITH AS STRONG AS HIS WAS?

MY FATHER WAS A DEVOUT CHRISTIAN.

MAYBE THE MAGIC OF THE SIREN HAD ALREADY GOTTEN TO US BY THEN.

WE DIDN'T EVEN THINK OF JUMPING ON THE BUS OUT OF TOWN.

IT'S OKAY. THEY'RE NOT GOING TO GET US.

ANYWAY, WE HAVE TO HIDE. LET'S GO TO MY PLACE.

YOU SHOULD'VE CALLED IF YOU WERE COMING— OH HO?

OH MY, KYOICHI! YOU'RE HOME?

WHO'S THAT WITH YOU?

BABY? WHAT BABY?

MOM... WHERE'D YOU GET THAT BABY LAST NIGHT?

AWFUL. YOU'RE SO CRUEL.

KYOICHI, WHY WOULD YOU TIE YOUR OWN MOTHER UP?

I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM SINCE YESTERDAY.

WHERE'S DAD?

HE WENT TO THE NEW FACTORY. HE WENT TO WORK.

I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT A BABY.

ANYWAY, KYOICHI, WHO IS THAT? YOUR GIRLFRIEND?

RRRRR

AAAH!

UUUUUUUURRRRRRRRRRRR

RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR

THE SIREN SOUNDED AGAIN THAT NIGHT.

I HAVE TO GO AGAIN TONIGHT.

I HAVE TO GO!

UUUUURRRRRRRRR

H-HURRY!

KYOICHI! UNTIE ME RIGHT NOW!

UUUUUUR

LORD CRUFFITH'S A DEMON. HE'S EVEN GREATER THAN DOLEMAN. THERE'S A DEMON IN THAT FACTORY!

RRRRRRR

I HAVE TO TAKE A BABY AND OFFER IT TO LORD CRUFFITH AGAIN TONIGHT!

HE EATS YOU IF YOU DISOBEY HIM!

YOU CAN'T GO AGAINST THAT SOUND. IT'S THE VOICE OF LORD CRUFFITH!

IT PLAYS OVER THE SPEAKER AT TOP VOLUME.

UURRR

IT'S NO USE COVERING YOUR EARS.

UU

HE'LL EAT ME IF I DON'T BRING A SACRIFICE!

HA HA HA HA! HE'S EATEN HALF OF THE VILLAGERS. HE ATE YOUR DAD!

THE DEVIL'S COMING TONIGHT...

UU

THE DEVIL WILL APPEAR IN THE LAKE OF BABY BLOOD WE MADE.

YOU'RE SHOKO, AREN'T YOU? YOU'RE GOING TO BE SACRIFICED TO THE DEVIL.

RRRR

RRR

KYOICHI ...

RRRRRRR

I'LL GROW WINGS IF YOU DON'T HURRY.

NOW... YOU UNDER-STAND, YES? UNTIE ME.

RRR

THE DEVIL WILL TAKE OVER THE WORLD.

SHOKO !

RRRCH RRRCH

RRRCH RRRCH

...

FLAD

HA HA HA HA!

THIS WAY, WE CAN FLY ANYWHERE IN JAPAN.

THIS ALL HAPPENED BECAUSE YOU YOUNG PEOPLE WENT OFF TO THE CITIES.

ONLY ON THE VILLAGE WOMEN.

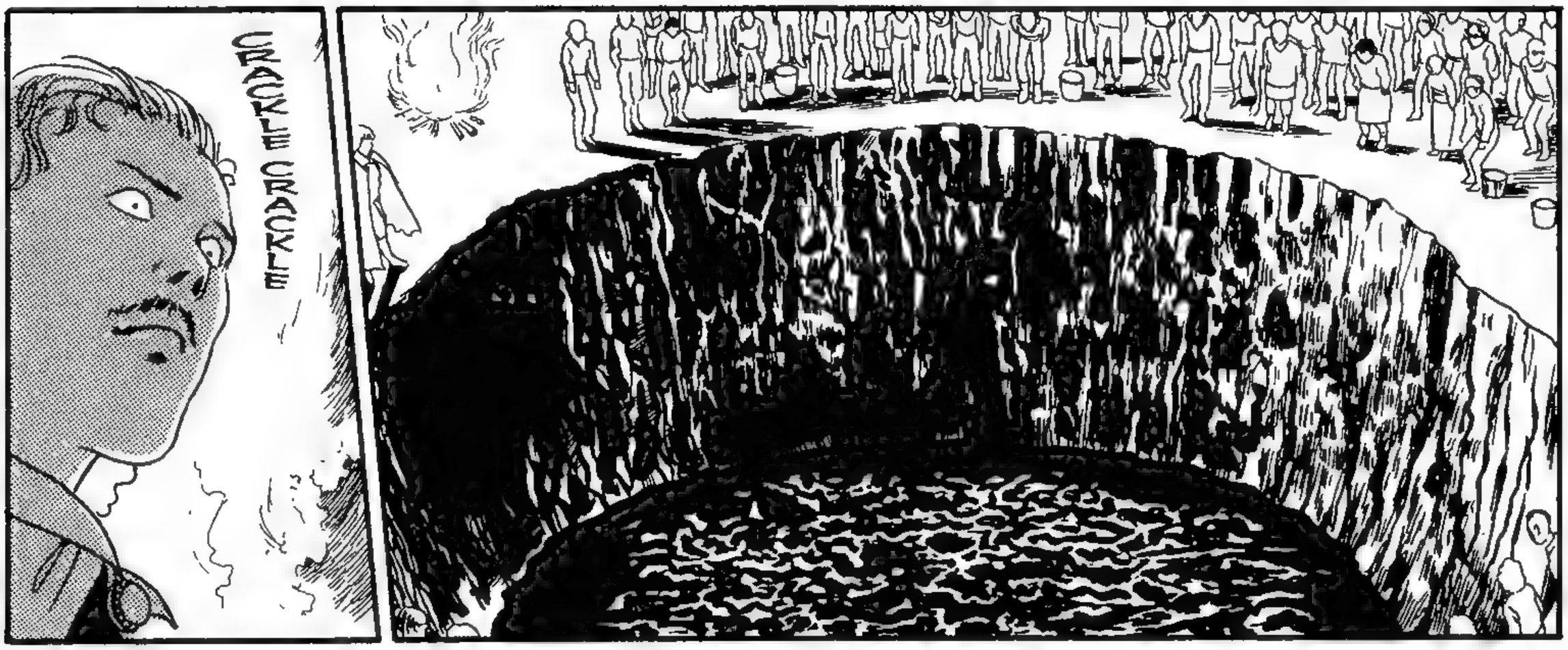
HA HA HA HA HA! LORD CRUFFITH BESTOWED THESE WINGS ON US.

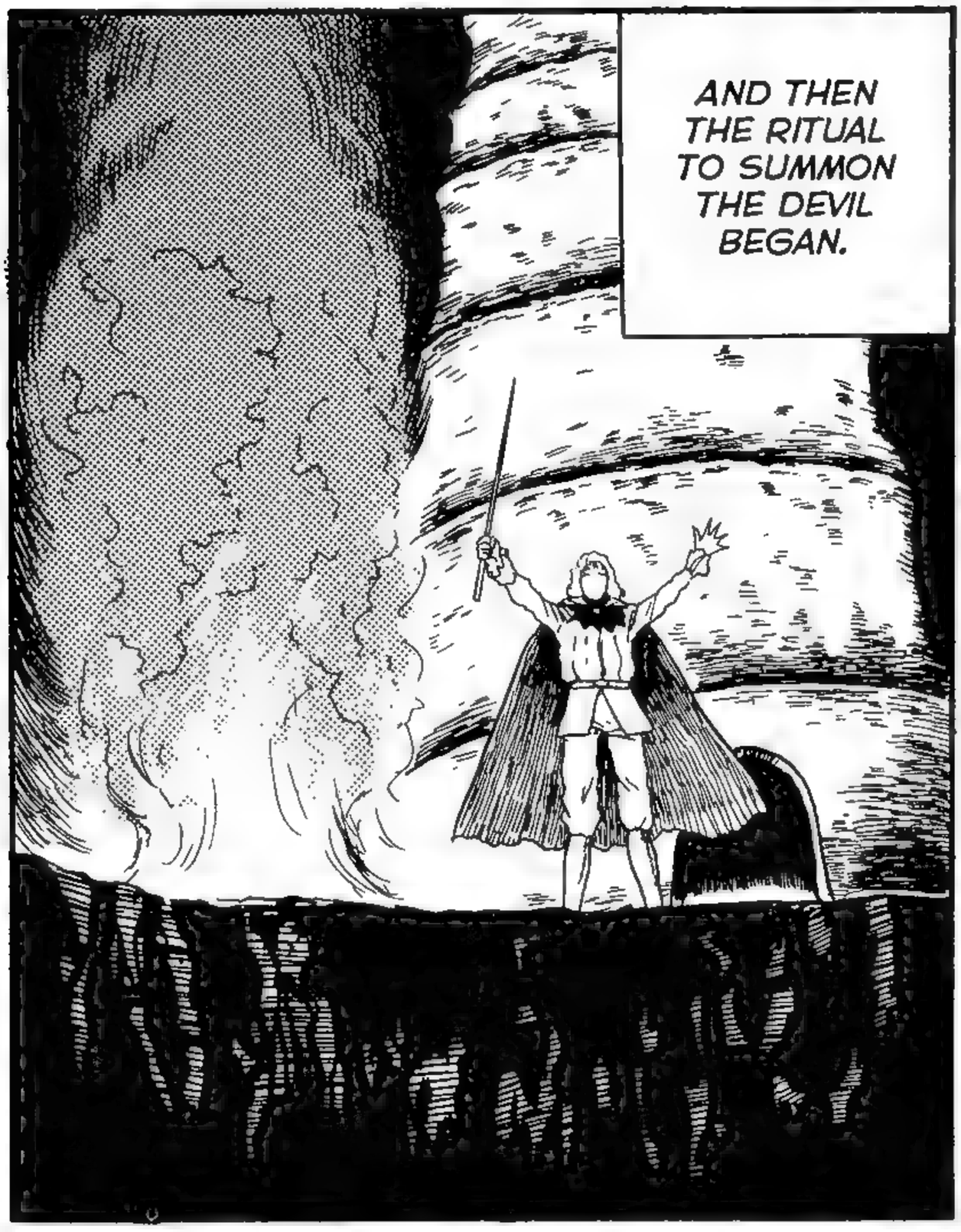
THINGS WOULD BE DIFFERENT IF YOU HADN'T LEFT THE VILLAGE.

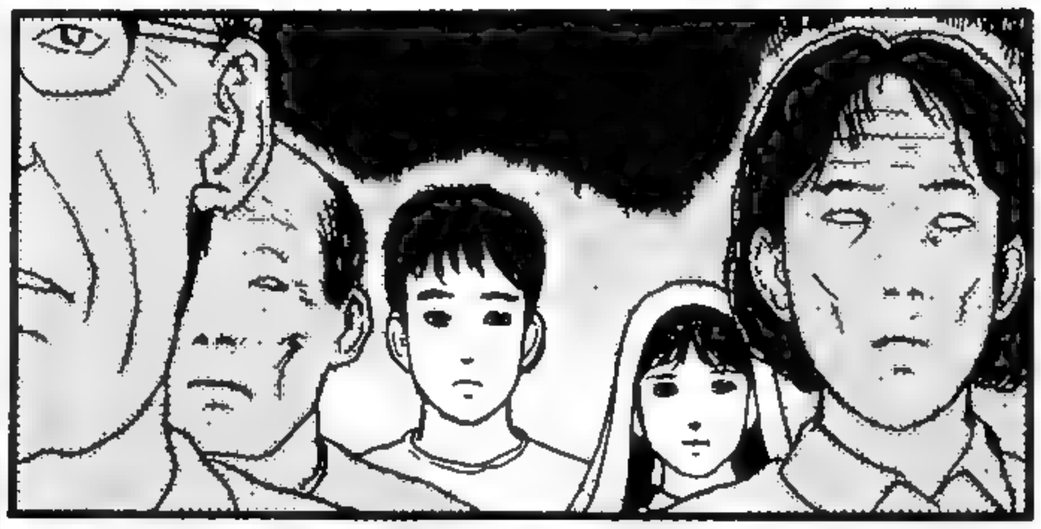
IF ONLY YOU HADN'T!

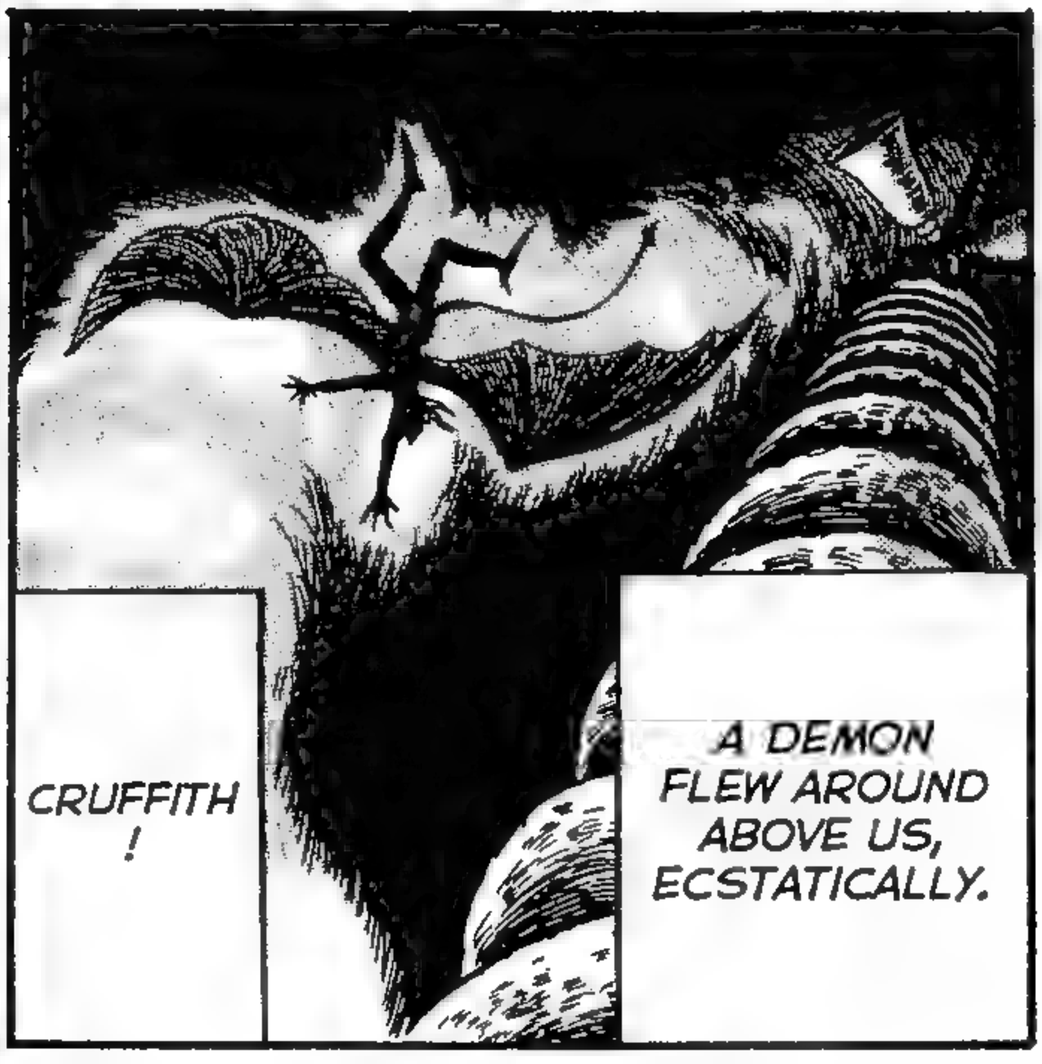
BEFORE I KNEW IT, SHOKO AND I WERE WALKING ALONG THE NIGHT ROAD.

SPLOSH SPLOSH
PSH


CRACKLE CRACKLE


AND THEN THE RITUAL TO SUMMON THE DEVIL BEGAN.




CRUFFITH !
A DEMON FLEW AROUND ABOVE US, ECSTATICALLY.

BRING THE SACRI-FICE.

I COULDN'T DO ANYTHING.

IT WAS YUKARI.

THEY'D TAKEN HER IN SHOKO'S PLACE.

GLANCE

APPEAR BEFORE US IN YOUR JET-BLACK MAJESTY!

HEAR ME!

GREAT AND MIGHTY DEVIL LUFUDO!

BRBL

BRBL

ZSSH

AAAAH.

AAAH, LUFUDO!

THMP

I OFFER YOU THIS YOUNG AND BEAUTIFUL VIRGIN.

FIEND

SHOVE

AH!

NOW! TAKE HER!

THAT VIRGIN IS THE SACRIFICE!

L-LORD LUFUDO! NOT ME! NOT DOLEMAN!

KNZUF

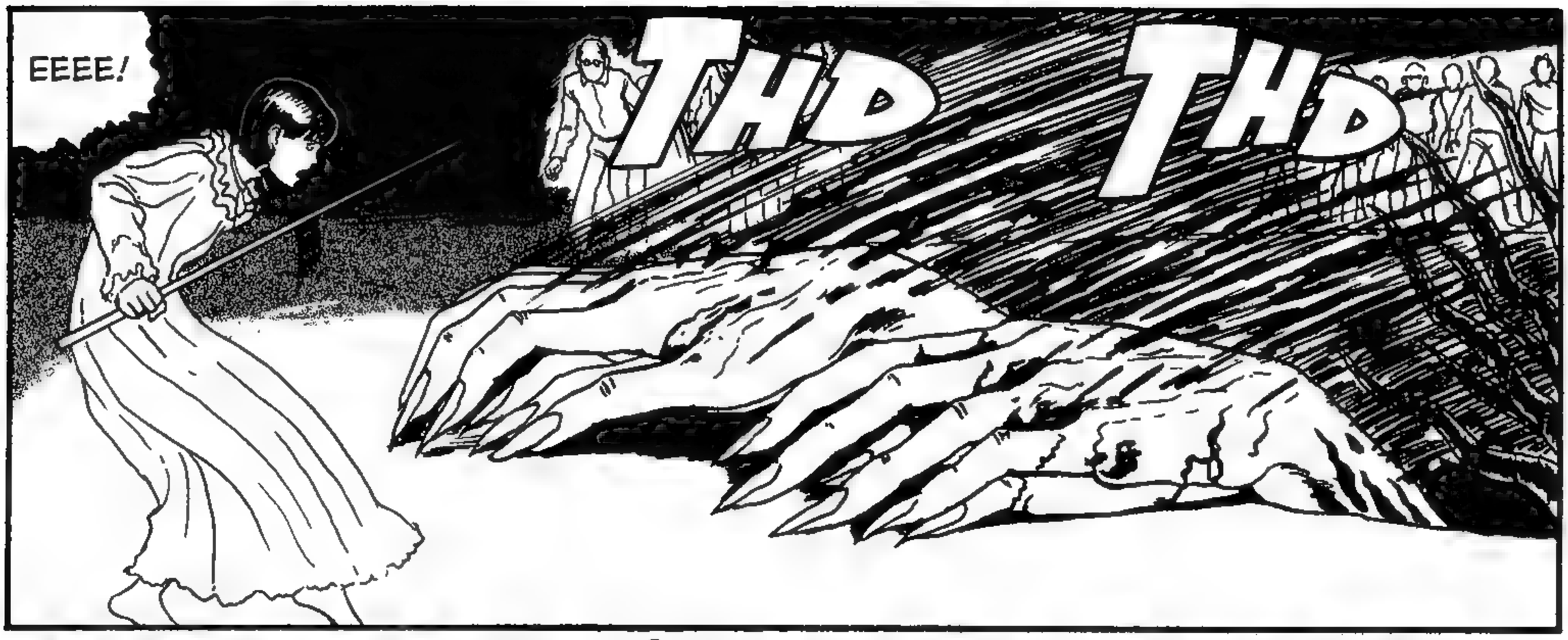
HNGAH!

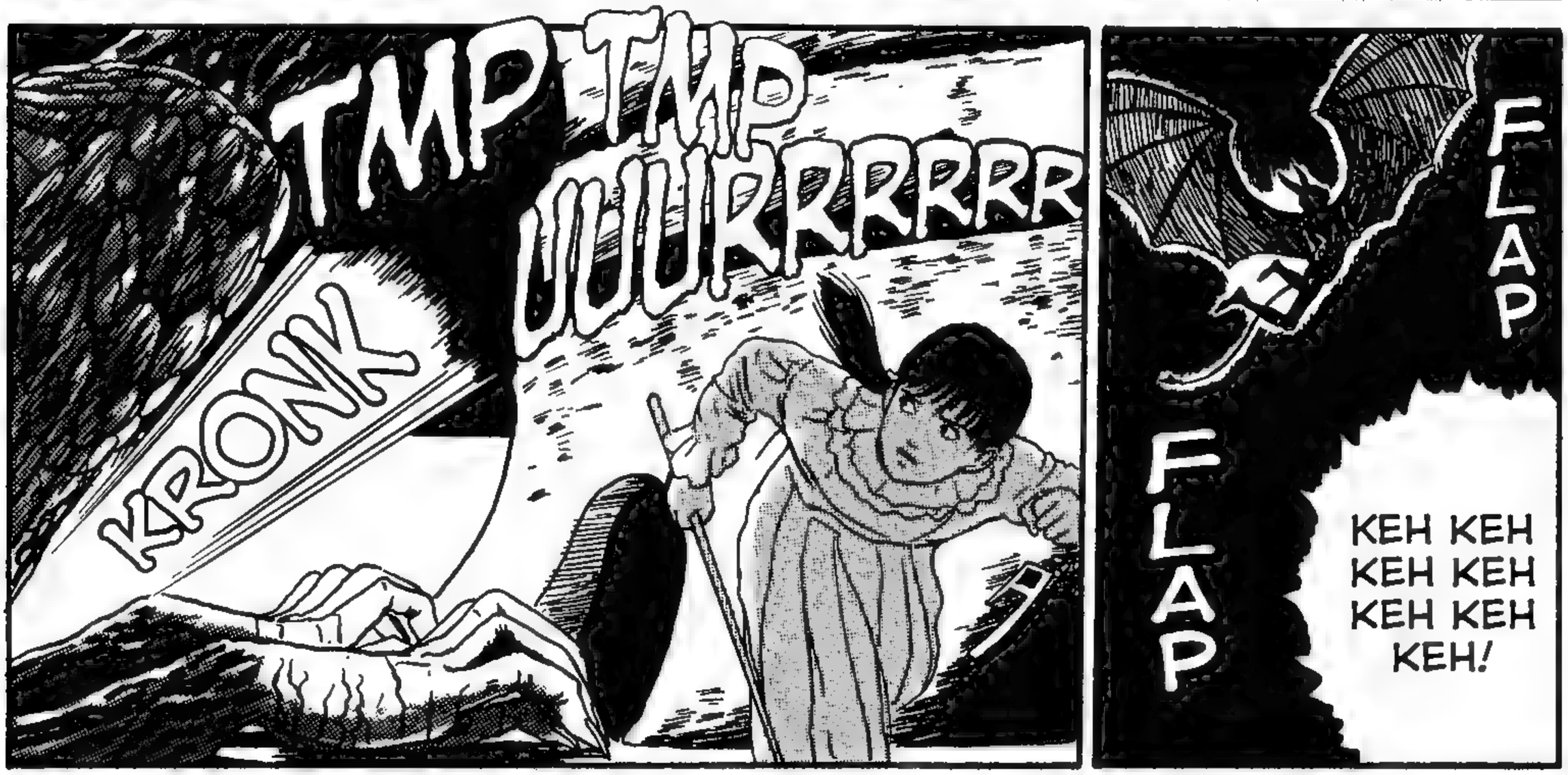
AAAH!

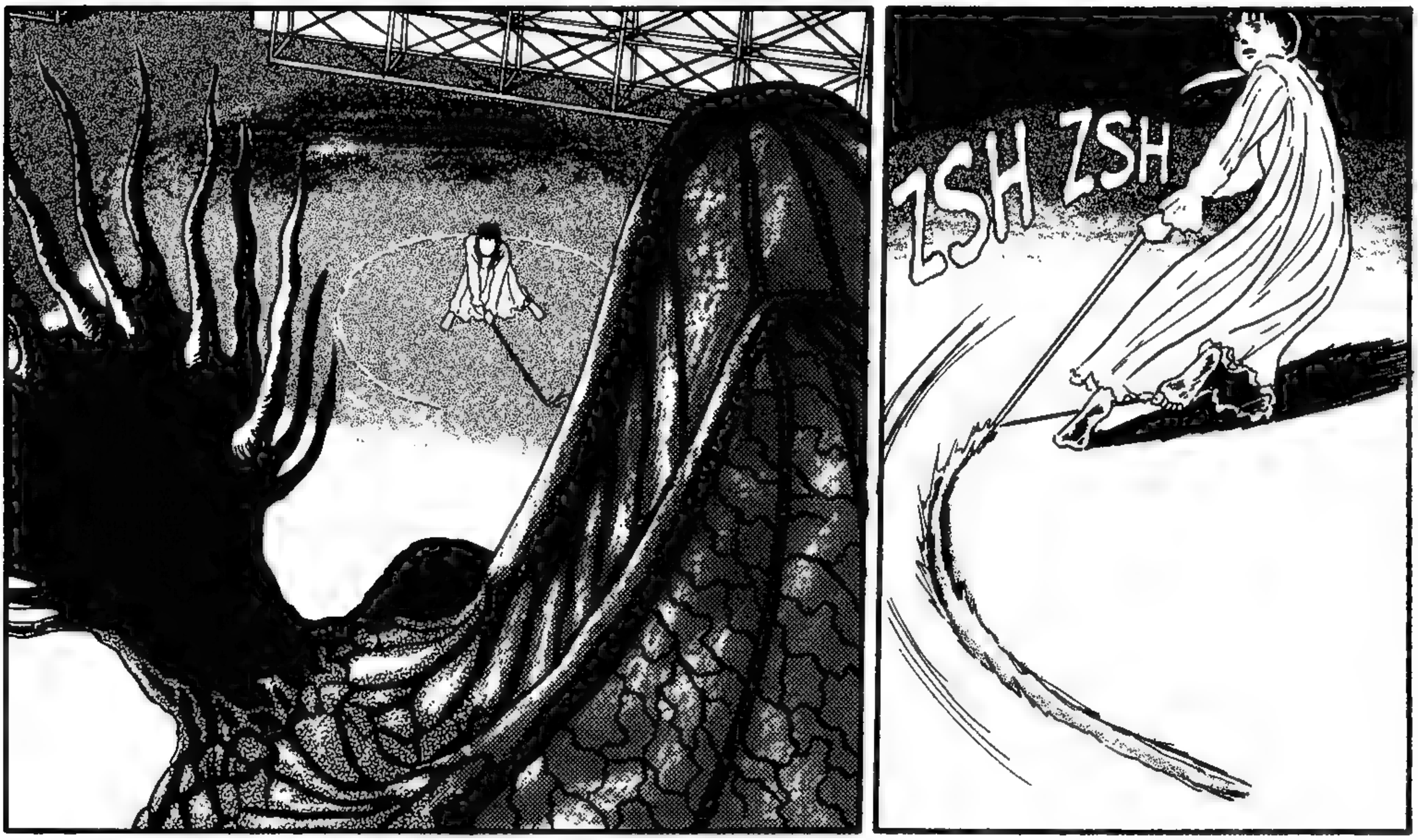
EEEAH!

WHUD

GIRL! YOU— WHY?! THE MAGIC'S NOT WORKING?!


EEEE!
THD
THD


TMP TMP
UUURRRRRRR
KRONK
FLAP
FLAP
KEH KEH
KEH KEH
KEH KEH
KEH!


ZSH ZSH

UUUUU

RRR

AT THE TIME, I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT YUKARI WAS DOING.

NOE NOE

UUUUU

RRR

THE DEVIL ROARED. HIS VOICE WAS TERRIFYING.

RRRRRR

KRRK KRRK KRRK KRRK KRRK KRRK

IT WAS ORDERS OF MAGNITUDE LOUDER THAN CRUFFITH'S THROUGH THE SPEAKER.

RRRR

UUUU

THE WOMEN FLEW UP AND BEGAN ATTACKING THE MEN!

RRRR

AAAAH!

EEAAH!

AAAAH!

AND THEN...

RRR

GRRRR

RRORR

KNOCK

SHOKO...

SHO—

KYOICHI! OVER HERE!

YUKARI!

GRAB

FLAP

HO HO HO HO HO!

EEEE!

EEAAH!

KEH KEH KEH!

THUD

AAAH! SHOKO!

AAAH!

KRAK

SHOKO!

AAAH!

BE A GOOD GIRL AND COME ON OUT!

YUKARI !! YOU MADE A MAGIC CIRCLE !

W- WATCH OUT!

HELP

SHOKO!

NO, KYOICHI! IT'S SAFE HERE! THE MONSTERS CAN'T COME INSIDE THE CIRCLE!

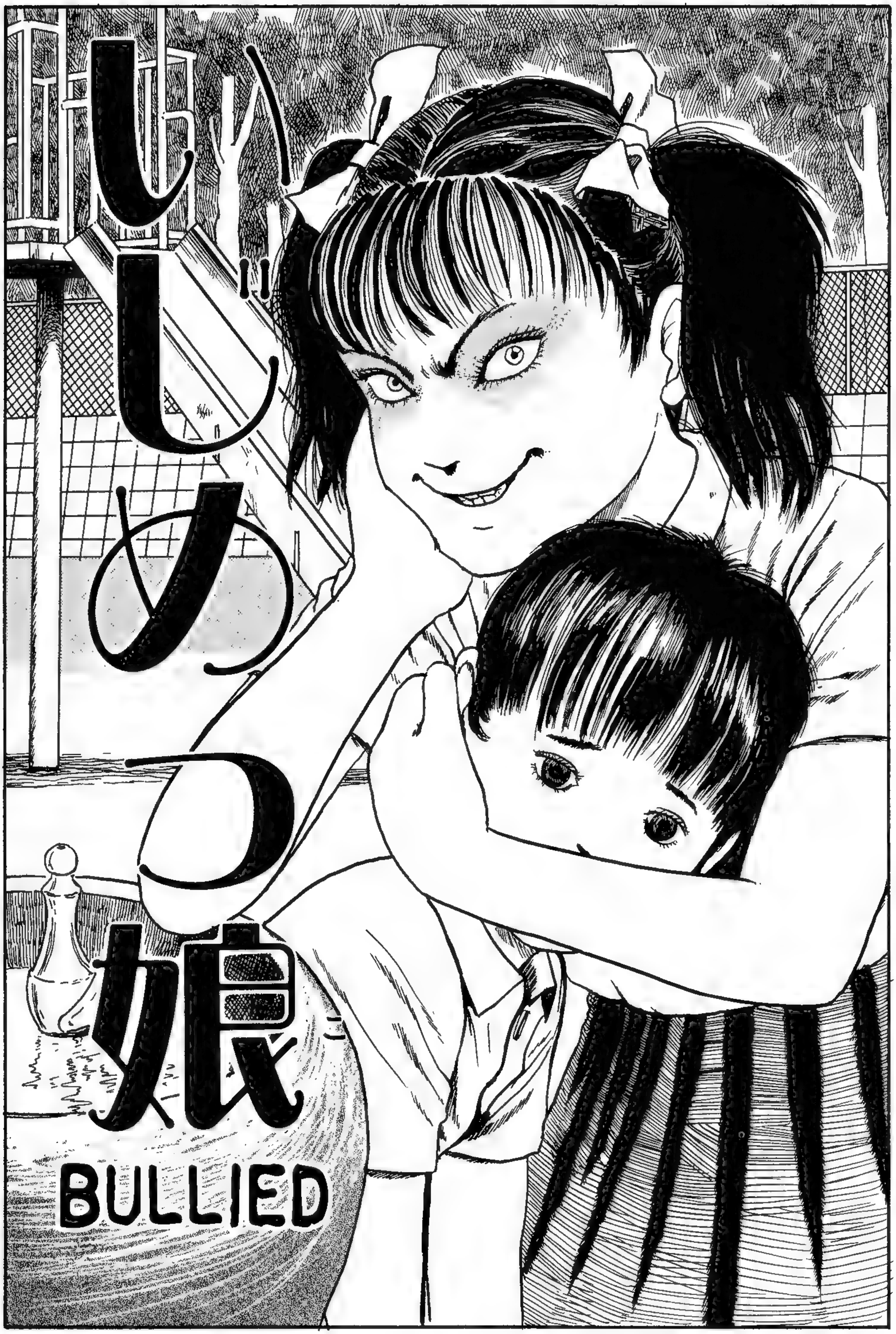
I'M SURE THE DEVIL TOOK HIS MINIONS TO THE BIG CITIES TO BRING ABOUT A NEW DARK AGE.

ALL HELL HAD BROKEN LOOSE...

THAT WAS THE SAD AND ABRUPT END OF THE GENTLE AND BEAUTIFUL SHOKO.

SOON, A FEARSOME CRY LIKE THAT OF THE SIREN WILL ECHO ACROSS THE ENTIRE WORLD.

AFTER CIRCLING ABOVE THE TOWN, THE DEMONS FLEW OFF TO THE EAST.


I'M
BULLIED

I'M GOING TO TELL YOU SOMETHING, SO PLEASE LISTEN.

I WONDER IF YOU'LL STILL WANT TO MARRY ME.

YUTARO.

BUT WHY WON'T YOU GIVE ME AN ANSWER? DON'T YOU LOVE ME?

WHAT? KURIKO, MY FEELINGS FOR YOU WON'T CHANGE.

THE CITY'S CHANGED, BUT THIS PARK NEVER HAS. NOT SINCE WE WERE KIDS.

YOU NEVER WANT TO COME TO THIS PARK, NOT EVEN WHEN I SUGGEST IT.

FOR ME— NO, FOR YOU, TOO, THIS IS A HAPPY PLACE, ISN'T IT?

YOU'VE BEEN A LITTLE OFF TODAY.

A DARK TIME?

THIS PARK IS A SYMBOL OF A DARK TIME IN MY PAST.

IF IT JUST DISAPPEARED ENTIRELY.

I... HOW WONDERFUL IT WOULD BE IF IT DID CHANGE.

ACTU-ALLY... I DON'T HAVE A LOT OF MEMORIES OF YOU HERE.

I KNOW I WAS KIND OF A JERK BACK THEN, BUT WHAT KID ISN'T?

YOU'RE NOT SAYING YOUR MEMORIES OF OUR TIME TOGETHER ARE DARK, ARE YOU?

BUT I CAN'T MARRY YOU WHEN I'M STILL HIDING MY PAST.

YOUR FEELINGS FOR ME MIGHT VERY WELL CHANGE.

I WANTED TO COME TO THE PARK TODAY BECAUSE I DECIDED TO TELL YOU ABOUT MY PAST.

THIS PARK USED TO BE A PLAYGROUND FOR YOU AND THE OTHER BOYS.

IT WAS... HOW OLD WAS I THEN?

YOU WERE A YEAR OLDER THAN ME, AND I ALWAYS CAME ALONG, HOPING YOU'D PLAY WITH ME.

KRSH

YAH!

YOU WERE AMAZING BACK THEN, YUTARO.

HA HA HA!

HOW'D YOU LIKE THAT! A NEW RECORD.

AAH! DANG IT!

SHE ALWAYS SHOWS UP.

HEY, LOOK! KURIKO'S HERE AGAIN.

HEY! KURIKOOOO! GO AWAAAAY!

HEY, KURIKO! GET OUT OF HERE.

SHUT UP, YOU DUMMY!

GO ON AND PLAY WITH HER! HAW HAW!

I KNOW! SHE'S IN LOVE WITH YUTARO!

THAT WAS WHEN HIS MOM BROUGHT HIM TO THE PARK.

FIIINE!

ARE YOU BY YOURSELF, YOUNG LADY?

OKAY, YOU HAVE FUN TOGETHER.

I'LL BE BACK LATER.

NO WAY! I GOT IT FOR PLAYING WITH THIS KID!

HEEEY! GIVE US SOME OF THAT CHOCOLAAAATE !

UM, SO... I, UM... OKAY, UH, I'M NAO.

SO WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

OKAY, YOU WANNA PLAY?

LET'S GO BUY SOME CANDY!

WHAT? BUT YOU'RE KIDS, TOO!

THIS SUCKS! SORRY, BUT WE'RE OUTTA HERE.

PFT! WHEN DID THIS PARK TURN INTO A PLAYGROUND FOR KIDS?

WHEE! WHEE!

HMPH!

NO ONE'S ON THE SWINGS, NAO. LET'S GO!

NAO TOOK TO ME RIGHT AWAY.

AUGH! LET'S GO!

HE CAME THE DAY AFTER, TOO, AND THE DAY AFTER THAT.

KURIKO-OOO!

THE NEXT DAY, HE CAME BY HIMSELF.

KURIKO!

NOOOO! PLAY WITH MEEEEE!

LISTEN, OKAY? I CAN'T PLAY TODAY. I HAVE A THING.

...

LET'S PLAY ON THE SWINGS, 'KAAAAAY!

PLAY WITH MEEEEEE! PLAY WITH MEEEEE!

I CAN'T TODAY!

I'M HOME.

C'MERE A SEC. I HAVE A SURPRISE FOR YOU.

OH! KURIKO. YOU'RE BACK.

NAOYA'S MOTHER BROUGHT THEM FOR US.

HUH?

WOW! CAKE!

THEY JUST MOVED TO A PLACE NEAR THE PARK, AND HE DOESN'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS YET. SO SHE HOPES YOU'LL KEEP PLAYING WITH HIM.

YOU MAKE SURE TO DO THAT, OKAY?

SHE SAID YOU'VE BEEN PLAYING WITH HIM.

NAO GLUED HIMSELF TO ME. I COULDN'T STAND IT ANYMORE.

I HATED IT SO MUCH.

I ENDED UP FORCED TO HANG OUT WITH NAOYA WHENEVER I WENT TO THE PARK TO GET CLOSER TO YOU, YUTARO.

A SECRET?

COME CLOSER. SO OKAY...

HEY, NAO? I'LL TELL YOU A SECRET.

...

YEAH... MY EAR'S RINGING.

DID I SCARE YOU?

WAAH!

I'M JUST GONNA TAKE A LOOK.

FWP FWP

WHAT?! IT'S RINGING? UH-OH.

NOOOO! GET IT OUT!

RING-RING BUGS ARE SCARY! THEY GO IN THROUGH YOUR EARS AND EAT YOUR BRAIN.

AAAH! THIS IS BAD! THERE'S A RING-RING BUG IN THERE.

OWWWW! THAT HURRRTS!

OKAY! I'LL GET IT FOR YOU!

YANK

KURIKO! YOU WON'T DO ANYTHING OUCHY AGAIN, RIGHT? LET'S PLAY LIKE BEFORE.

BUT HE STILL KEPT COMING.

Yah!

Wow!

WAAAAAH!

I STARTED PICKING ON HIM.

I THOUGHT HE'D STOP COMING TO THE PARK IF I DID.

REEEE

REEEE

NNNN

REEEE

BURBLE BURBLE BURBLE BURBLE

I WANNA DRINK, TOO.

BURBLE BURBLE BURBLE BURBLE

COME ON.

I KNOW! I'LL GIVE YOU SOME WATER THAT'S EVEN BETTER.

NOPE.

TURN THE WATER ON. I WANT SOME, TOO.

SKRK

AAH, THAT WAS GREAT.

I CAN'T DRINK THE GUTTER WATER.

C'MON, DRINK IT.

WAAAAH! NO, KURIKO!

OKAY! DRINK UP!

BZZ

BZZ

RRRRRR

I SAID, DRINK!

SPLSH

WAAAH! WAAAH!

NO MATTER HOW AWFUL I WAS, HE KEPT COMING BACK FOR MORE. I BASICALLY CAME TO LIKE PICKING ON HIM.

WAS IT THAT NAO COULDN'T FORGET THE ME WHO USED TO BE NICE AND PLAY WITH HIM?

OKAY ...

LET'S PLAY SWORDS, NAO!

EN GARDE!

WHAP

HIYAH!

WAAAAAH!

WHAP WHAP WHAP

WAAAAAH!

YOU GOTTA JUMP! YOU HAFTA!

OTHERWISE, I WON'T PLAY WITH YOU ANYMORE!

OKAY! BE BRAVE!

JUST JUMP RIGHT ON DOWN!

PLEASE STOP HIM!

MA'AM, NAO SAYS HE'S GOING TO JUMP!

WAAA-AAAH!

I'M COMING. YOU JUST WAIT THERE.

DEAR ME! YOU STOP THAT RIGHT NOW.

NAO, WHAT'S WRONG?!

YIKES!

...

RRRIP

WAAA-AAH!

WAAAAH! MOMMY!

SHE GAVE ME CHOCOLATE AGAIN.

YOU DIDN'T TELL HER THE TRUTH, DID YOU, NAO?

I WAS PRETTY SUR-PRISED WHEN YOUR MOM CAME YESTER-DAY.

SO I WENT TO GET HIM.

NAO DIDN'T COME TO THE PARK THE NEXT DAY.

REALLYYYY ?

UM. SO. OKAY. I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING.

WOULD YOU HURRY UP!

COME ON!

GREAT! LET'S CHECK IF THAT'S TRUE!

OWWW!

TAKE A LOOK.

YOUR TRIAL STARTS NOW.

ROLL ROLL

ONI

BEWARE OF THE DOG

RZZT

Z Z Z Z Z Z Z Z

GRRRRRR

KURIKO, I'M SCARED.

GO GET IT! IF YOU'RE INNOCENT, ONI WON'T DO ANYTHING.

ONI

GRRRRRR

RAAR RAAR

I'M REALLY SCARED!

AAA-AAAH!

JUST GO ALREADY!

BEWARE OF THE DOG

I RAN AWAY. A LITTLE WHILE AFTER THAT, HE MOVED.

I GUESS HE WAS HURT PRETTY BADLY.

SO...

WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM?

SO THAT'S WHAT THIS WAS ABOUT.

HUH.

HOW DO YOU FEEL NOW THAT YOU KNOW?

YUTARO, I WAS A HORRIBLE CHILD.

ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THAT.

SO THEN... I HAVE TO TELL YOU THIS, TOO.

I... I RAN INTO NAOYA THE OTHER DAY.

MY FEELINGS HAVEN'T CHANGED. THAT WAS AGES AGO. AND KIDS DO THAT KIND OF STUFF.

DID YOU THINK THIS WOULD MAKE ME HATE YOU OR SOMETHING?

NAOYA.

IT'S ME. YOU DON'T RECOGNIZE ME?

THAT'S YOU, ISN'T IT?

KURIKO.

NAO... YA...

WHAT?

BUT HE WAS REALLY NICE TO ME. HAD HE FORGOTTEN?

HOW ABOUT WE GET TEA?

BECAUSE OF EVERY-THING THAT HAPPENED.

THE COLOR DRAINED FROM MY FACE.

AAH, IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU.

YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED AT ALL, KURIKO. YOU WERE ALWAYS SO BEAUTIFUL.

IT'S SUCH A SURPRISE. YOU TURNED OUT SO WELL.

I NEVER DREAMED I'D RUN INTO YOU.

I MOVED HERE FOR WORK.

IS THAT PARK STILL THERE?

THEY REALLY ARE GOOD MEMORIES.

YOU DO FLATTER ME.

MY...

WE STILL HAVE SO MUCH TO TALK ABOUT.

I KNOW. HOW ABOUT WE GO THERE SOMETIME?

YES... IT HASN'T CHANGED A BIT.

NAOYA...

I'M GLAD I MOVED BACK HERE.

IT REALLY HASN'T CHANGED.

WE WALKED UP IT WITH YOU PULLING MY EARS, RIGHT?

THAT HILL'S JUST THE SAME, TOO.

IT'S JUST...YOU WERE SO CUTE.

I WASN'T TRYING TO BE MEAN.

REALLY?! WOW!

I-I'M SORRY.

YOU WERE QUITE THE TOM-BOY.

YOU WERE THE ONLY ONE WHO'D PLAY WITH ME.

I REALLY LOOKED UP TO YOU.

...

JUST SEEING YOU FROM BEHIND THE OTHER DAY, I KNEW IT WAS YOU RIGHT AWAY.

I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT YOU ALL THIS TIME.

NO.

WE MET SEVERAL TIMES AFTER THAT.

WAS THAT THE LAST TIME YOU SAW HIM THEN?

YUTARO ...

I WAS FINALLY FREED OF THE GUILT I'VE CARRIED AROUND ALL THESE YEARS.

WHAT ?!

NAOYA?

WE HAVE A DATE AGAIN TODAY.

HE SHOULD BE HERE SOON.

I'VE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH NAOYA.

YUTARO... I'M SORRY.

...

...NAOYA AND I GOT MARRIED AT A CEREMONY WITH JUST US.

AFTER YUTARO LEFT...

I FIRMLY BELIEVED OUR HAPPINESS WOULD GO ON FOREVER.

EVENTUALLY, WE HAD AN ADORABLE BABY BOY, HIROSHI.

I PUT IN A MISSING PERSON REPORT, BUT THEY FOUND NO TRACE OF HIM.

HE SAID HE WAS OFF TO WORK AND NEVER CAME HOME AGAIN.

NOT LONG AFTER HIROSHI WAS BORN, NAOYA DISAPPEARED.

BUT IT DIDN'T LAST THAT LONG.

DON'T WORRY. I CAN RAISE HIROSHI BY MYSELF!

MOM, I'M NOT LEAVING THIS APARTMENT. NAOYA'S *GOING* TO COME HOME!

TIME PASSED.

FOUR YEARS LATER ...

IS IT SUPPERTIME YET?

HANG ON A BIT LONGER.

I'M HUNGRYYY!

MOMMYYY!

HIROSHI! PLEASE! BE A GOOD BOY.

MOMMYYY!

I'M HUNGRYYY!

MOMMYYYY!

MOMMYYY! IS SUPPER READY?

MOMMY'S TIRED FROM WORK.

I'M NOT NAO.

BE QUIET AND EAT, NAO.

MOMMY, I WANT AN OMELET!

I WANT CURRY RICE.

FISH AGAIN?

YOU REALLY DO LOOK JUST LIKE HIM.

SORRY... HIROSHI. YOU LOOK SO MUCH LIKE YOUR DADDY WHEN HE WAS LITTLE.

MOMMY.

BUT HE STILL STUCK WITH ME.

HE WAS SO CUTE WHEN I PICKED ON HIM. IT WAS FUN.

MOMMY USED TO PICK ON HIM EVERY DAY.

I WANT TO PICK ON HIM AGAIN.

AAH, I WONDER WHAT NAO'S DOING NOW.

MAYBE HE WANTED ME TO PICK ON HIM?

FOR SOME REASON, I WANTED TO PICK ON HIM SO MUCH, I COULD HARDLY STAND IT.

TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP

YOU YANKED ON MY EARS, MOMMYYY!

WAAA-AAAH!

THAT'S IT, ISN'T IT.

WAAAAAAH

YOU WERE PLANNING TO GET REVENGE ON ME RIGHT FROM THE START!

OR GET ABDUCTED BY AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION.

YOU DIDN'T RUN OFF WITH ANOTHER WOMAN.

NAOYA, YOU DIDN'T FALL OFF A CLIFF.

I'M NOT NAO.

NAO! HOW LONG ARE YOU GOING TO CRY? BOYS DON'T WHIMPER AND WHINE!

HIC... HIC...

FINE THEN! I'LL PLAY WITH YOU!

I'LL TAKE YOU TO THE PARK RIGHT NOW!

YOU REALLY ARE AN AWFUL CHILD. YOU CAME BECAUSE YOU KNEW I WANTED TO PLAY WITH YUTARO, DIDN'T YOU?

YOU CAME TO GET IN THE WAY.

NIGHTTIME'S EVEN BETTER.

MOMMY, IT'S NIGHTTIME.

I'LL PLAY WITH YOU AT THE PARK!

YOU WON'T PULL ON MY EARS AGAIN, RIGHT, MOMMY?

I WON'T DO ANYTHING... NOTHING AT ALL. HEE HEE HEE!

BULLIED/END

脱走兵の家

DESERTER

RESEARCH ASSISTANCE:
YOICHI YOSHIMURA

WE HAVE A DESERTER AT OUR HOUSE.

HE'S HIDING ON THE SECOND FLOOR OF OUR STOREHOUSE.

...TO HAVE A PLAIN MEAL WITH US.

AT NIGHT, HE SNEAKS OUT AT A SPECIFIC TIME...

HE SIMPLY SMILES AND SCRATCHES HIS HEAD WHEN MY BROTHER CALLS HIM THAT, HIS FACE PALE FROM NEVER SEEING THE SUN.

HELLO, ADERA. AND...

HEY, FURUKAWA, YOU DESERTER. NO ONE'S FOUND YOU, HM?

HELLO TO YOU, SHIGEKO, KIKUYO.

SORRY FOR THE TROUBLE.

WHOA, WHOA. *NOW* YOU SAY THAT?

IF ANYONE FOUND OUT I WAS HERE, YOU'D BE IN TROUBLE, TOO.

IT MUST BE A REAL BOTHER TO HAVE A TRAITOR LIKE ME HERE.

I KNOW YOU'RE DOING ALL YOU CAN TO GET BY IN THIS TIME OF WAR, AND THEN I...

BUT ISN'T IT HARD ONLY EATING ONCE A DAY?

THAT'S RIGHT. AND WE'RE OUT IN THE COUNTRY, SO THERE'S NO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT FOOD.

THANKS, SHIGEKO. I'M GOOD.

BUT WE'RE FRIENDS, RIGHT?

IF YOU WERE A STRANGER, I WOULDN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THIS.

ADERA... THANKS.

HMM...

SHIGEKO, WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE INVASION?

JAPANESE TROOPS HAVE FINALLY LANDED IN AMERICA, FURUKAWA.

REALLY?! I DIDN'T THINK JAPAN HAD THAT KIND OF POWER.

*TAGS ON WALL: PRO-WAR PROPAGANDA

HEH HEH HEH. YOU ALWAYS SAY THAT.

I...I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE WAR.

YOU THINK SO, TOO, KIKUYO?

WELL, JAPAN CONQUERED ASIA, SO OF COURSE WE CAN TAKE AMERICA.

OH YEAH?

THIS BRIEF PERIOD IS THE ONLY TIME HE EVER LEAVES IT.

WHEN SUPPER'S FINISHED, FURUKAWA GOES BACK TO THE STOREHOUSE.

I MEAN, SHIGEKO DOES. YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE STEPPING OUT OF LINE.

KIKUYO, WHY CAN'T YOU EVER WORK WITH ME?

AND THEN MY BROTHER ALWAYS ATTACKS ME FOR MY ATTITUDE.

FURUKAWA! HURRY TO THE STORE-HOUSE!

THEY'VE TOTALLY GOT THEIR EYES ON US!

BAZU BAZU

THE SOLDIER COMES ONCE A MONTH.

MILITARY POLICE!

OPEN UP! OPEN THIS DOOR!

WHAT TOOK YOU? WHAT'S GOING ON IN THERE?!

GOOD EVENING.

IF YOU DON'T OPEN IT, I'LL KNOCK IT DOWN!

OPEN UP!

YES, COMING! I'LL OPEN IT NOW!

HE'S A SERIOUS CRIMINAL. WHEN WE CATCH HIM, HE'LL BE PUT TO DEATH BY FIRING SQUAD!

I'M SORRY. THE HOUSE IS QUITE LARGE, SO...

YOU WOULDN'T BE HIDING A DESERTER IN HERE, WOULD YOU?!

WE DON'T KNOW HIM! WE DON'T KNOW ANYONE LIKE THAT!

OF COURSE NOT!

WE'RE SEARCHING FOR A MAN CALLED SABURO FURUKAWA!

*ARMBAND: MILITARY POLICE

I'LL NEED YOU TO LET ME TAKE A LOOK!

OF COURSE! COME IN!

BUT WE'VE HAD REPORTS OF HIM BEING SEEN HERE!

THAT MUST BE SOME MISTAKE!

SURE, THANKS. ANOTHER GREAT PERFORMANCE.

HE'S PROBABLY SHAKING IN HIS BOOTS.

SHOULD WE CALL IT QUITS FOR TONIGHT?

...

I'LL TRY TO THINK OF SOMETHING TO REALLY WIND HIM UP.

TRUE. IF I KEEP REPEATING THE SAME LINES, HE'LL CATCH ON.

BUT YOU SAY THE SAME THING EVERY MONTH. DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT NEXT TIME.

NAH, HAPPY TO. THE VEGETABLES YOU GROW ARE SO TASTY.

OKAY, OSHIMA. TODAY'S PAYMENT. THANKS FOR COMING ALL THIS WAY.

HEE HEE HEE! THAT WOULD REALLY ADD TO THE CHARACTER.

AND MAYBE I'LL EVEN WEAR A LITTLE MUSTACHE NEXT TIME.

SEE YOU, ADERA, SHIGEKO.

YEAH, THANKS AGAIN.

FURUKAWA'S THE ONLY ONE WHO'S STILL LIVING THE WAR.

AUGUST 15 IS EIGHT YEARS AGO ALREADY. TO THINK HE HAS NO IDEA HOW THE WHOLE WORLD CHANGED AFTER THAT!

IT'S ACTUALLY PRETTY FUNNY. WITH THE KOREAN WAR, JAPAN'S RECOVERY HAS BEEN REMARKABLE.

YEAH. HE HAS HIS OWN GRUDGE AGAINST FURUKAWA.

I CAN'T BELIEVE OSHIMA DOESN'T GET TIRED OF HELPING US.

G'NIGHT, KIKUYO.

OF COURSE, HE DESERTED BECAUSE FURUKAWA PUSHED HIM TO.

WHILE THEY WERE RUNNING AWAY, OSHIMA GOT CAUGHT AND FURUKAWA LEFT HIM.

OSHIMA WAS ACTUALLY ONE OF THE GUYS WHO DESERTED WITH FURUKAWA.

HUH? I DIDN'T TELL YOU?

GRUDGE ?

SO...HE'S GETTING REVENGE THEN.

THEY EVENTUALLY SENT HIM TO THE FRONT LINES WHERE FIGHTING WAS THE WORST.

OSHIMA WAS PUT IN CONFINEMENT AS A DESERTER.

SO?

I DON'T THINK IT'S SUCH A BAD DEAL.

HE SAYS HE WANTS YOU TO BE HIS WIFE, SHIGEKO.

BUT YOU KNOW...

...THAT'S NOT THE ONLY REASON HE COMES EVERY MONTH.

WHY? WHY ARE YOU AVOIDING ME?

YOU COULD AT LEAST ANSWER ME...

...I SAW HER CRYING IN THE STOREHOUSE, NOT TOO LONG AFTER THE WAR ENDED.

I THINK SHIGEKO HAS A CRUSH ON FURUKAWA.

ONE TIME ...

FURUKAWA, PLEASE. OPEN THE DOOR.

I HAVEN'T SEEN HER CRY AGAIN SINCE.

IS IT BECAUSE YOU CAN'T FORGET KIMIE? SO THEN WHAT ABOUT HOW I FEEL?

...

HOW LONG ARE YOU GOING TO DO THIS?!

COME ON!

THINKING ABOUT THAT, I FELT LIKE I COULDN'T KEEP UP THIS CHARADE ANY LONGER.

HOW LONG ARE YOU GOING TO KEEP FURUKAWA LOCKED UP IN THE STORE-HOUSE?!

SHIGEKO, HOW DO YOU FEEL?

YOU'VE LOST YOUR MINDS!

GREAT! I HOPE HE DOES! SOMETHING'S WRONG WITH BOTH OF YOU!

SHH! DON'T YELL. HE'LL HEAR YOU.

HOW LONG IS THIS CHARADE GOING TO LAST?!

AND NOW THIS AMERICAN INVASION? YOU KEEP MAKING UP RIDICULOUS STORIES!

YOU'RE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE FACT THAT HE HAS NO IDEA WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE WORLD, LYING TO HIM FOR YEARS!

YOU DELIBERATELY PASTE ALL THESE OUTDATED SLOGANS ON THE WALLS.

I SAID, LET GO!

KIKUYO ...

LET GO OF ME!

WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

KIKUYO, YOU SHUT YOUR MOUTH!

BUT...DON'T YOU FEEL BAD FOR KIMIE? OUR POOR SISTER DIED WHEN SHE WAS ONLY 18.

KIKUYO, LISTEN CAREFULLY. WHAT WE'RE DOING MIGHT SEEM FOOLISH.

IT'S HIS FAULT SHE'S DEAD.

LOCKING FURUKAWA UP HERE IS A MEMORIAL FOR KIMIE. IT'S OUR REVENGE ON HIM.

KIMIE ...

HE RAN AWAY BECAUSE HE COULDN'T HANDLE THE MILITARY'S STRICT RULES.

...FURUKAWA DESERTED HIS REGIMENT, THE SUMMER OF 1944.

AND HE CAME TO MY BROTHER, HIS GOOD FRIEND, FOR HELP.

IT WAS NINE YEARS AGO WHEN...

ADERA.

FURU-
KAWA!

WE HAD LOST OUR PARENTS, SO IT WAS JUST US FOUR SIBLINGS ON THE FARM.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? I'M PRETTY SURE I HEARD YOU JOINED UP.

BUT THERE WAS NO WAY HE COULD ABANDON A FRIEND, SO HE DECIDED TO HIDE HIM IN THE STORE-HOUSE.

THE WAR WAS INTENSIFYING, AND THERE WERE FOOD SHORTAGES, SO WHILE WE DID HAVE A FARM, LIFE WASN'T EASY. PLUS, THE BREADWINNER OF OUR FAMILY, MY BROTHER, WAS SERIOUSLY INJURED AND IN BED RECUPERATING.

I NEED YOU TO HIDE ME.

PLEASE.

I'LL GET KIMIE TO BRING YOU A FUTON.

THERE ARE ALSO LOTS OF PLACES TO HIDE IN HERE, IF IT COMES TO THAT.

THANKS A LOT, ADERA.

I KNOW IT'S NOT THE BEST, BUT I THINK THIS IS THE SAFEST PLACE FOR YOU.

OH, PLEASE DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT.

SORRY FOR CAUSING TROUBLE FOR YOU, TOO, KIMIE.

I KNOW I'M A DISGRACE. BUT I COULDN'T HANDLE MILITARY LIFE.

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU WENT AND DESERTED.

SHIGE, LET'S GO GET A FUTON.

YEAH. I FELL FROM PRETTY HIGH UP AT THE FACTORY.

IS IT BAD?

I'M ITCHING TO GET OUT THERE AND FIGHT. BUT YOU SEE THE STATE I'M IN.

DON'T BE SO PATHETIC. ALL CITIZENS HAVE TO COME TOGETHER AS ONE RIGHT NOW.

WHERE SHOULD WE PUT THE FUTON?

OVER THERE'S GOOD.

I'M BEG-GING YOU.

SAY, ADERA. DON'T TURN ME IN, OKAY?

BUT IF THE TOKKO OR MILITARY POLICE COME, THAT'S THE END OF IT.

WELL, I'LL DO WHAT I CAN.

YEAH, I KNOW...

THAT'D LAND ME IN JAIL, TOO.

*TOKKO: SPECIAL HIGHER POLICE. A POLICE UNIT CHARGED WITH DEALING WITH POLITICAL DISSENT UNTIL THE END OF THE WAR.

OUT OF CAUTION, WE BROUGHT HIS MEALS TO THE STOREHOUSE BACK THEN. THAT WAS KIMIE'S JOB.

AND SO FURUKAWA'S LIFE IN HIDING BEGAN.

FURUKAWA? I BROUGHT DINNER.

FURU-KAWA?

YES, KIMIE. THANKS AS ALWAYS.

I GET PRETTY BLUE BY MYSELF.

BUT WOULD YOU MIND TALKING WITH ME FOR A BIT?

OH... NO.

DO YOU HAVE ANY LAUNDRY?

NO... IF YOU DON'T MIND THAT IT'S JUST ME.

OH, I'M SORRY. I DON'T WANT TO PUSH YOU.

AND SO KIMIE CAME TO SPEND MORE AND MORE TIME IN FURUKAWA'S ROOM AFTER BRINGING HIM HIS MEALS.

I'VE BEEN HERE A WHILE, HUH?

I WONDER HOW LONG THIS LIFE'LL GO ON.

MARCH 10, 1945.

WHAT'S THE DATE TODAY?

I'M SUCH A LOSER.

YOU'RE NOT A LOSER.

YOU... YOU PROBABLY LOOK DOWN ON ME.

THEY MADE US ACT LIKE ANIMALS AND INSECTS.

I WAS SO MISERABLE WHEN THEY MADE ME PRETEND I WAS A CICADA.

THEY'D MAKE US PUT OUR HANDS ON A DESK AND PRETEND LIKE WE WERE PEDALING A BIKE.

IN THE ARMY...THEY BEAT US EVERY DAY.

IF YOU MADE A MISTAKE, THE WHOLE SQUAD GOT PUNISHED.

SHE'S PRESSED UP AGAINST FURUKAWA IN HIS ROOM!

WHAT HAPPENED, SHIGEKO?

BROTHER, KIMIE'S BEING DIRTY.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN HERE?!

KIMIE!

FURU-KAWA!

I-I'M SORRY, ADERA.

JUST GET OUT!

BROTHER ...

I BELIEVE YOU. BUT...

...FURUKAWA. THINK ABOUT YOUR POSITION FOR A SECOND. YOU'RE A DESERTER IN A TIME OF NATIONAL CRISIS.

WE WERE JUST TALKING. BELIEVE ME.

IT'S MY FAULT. DON'T BLAME KIMIE.

IF YOU'VE GOT THE TIME TO CHAT WITH A GIRL, THEN HOW ABOUT THINKING A BIT ABOUT THE FUTURE OF JAPAN?

IF I WEREN'T SO BANGED UP, I'D BE FIRST IN LINE TO ENLIST!

AND WITH THE SISTER OF THE MAN WHO SAVED YOU!

YOU'RE A COMPLETE SOCIAL OUTCAST. AREN'T YOU ASHAMED TO BE FLIRTING WITH A GIRL LIKE THIS IN BROAD DAYLIGHT?

DON'T GO TALKING SO BIG TO FURUKAWA!

WHAT ?!

I CAN'T TAKE MY EYES OFF YOU FOR A SECOND! YOU'RE BOTH A DISGRACE TO THE PEOPLE OF JAPAN!

AND WHY ARE YOU LOOKING AT ME LIKE THAT?

KIMIE! ARE YOU STILL HERE?!

YOU'RE NOT TO COME HERE AGAIN! SHAMELESS GIRL!

SLAP

SHUT UP!

WHAT?! YOU'RE SAYING I FELL ON PURPOSE THEN?!

I'M NOT! EVERYONE IN TOWN IS!

TALKING BIG?!

THEY SAY YOU GOT HURT BECAUSE YOU'RE A DRAFT DODGER.

THE WHOLE TOWN'S TALKING.

OH! KIMIE.

KIMIE! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?!

HYOO HYOO HYOO

KIMIE !!

WHK WHK WHK

UNFORTUNATELY, AN AMERICAN PLANE APPEARED IN THE SKY JUST THEN.

KIMIE!

EVER SINCE, FURUKAWA'S KEPT THE DOOR SHUT TIGHT AND NOT LET ANY OF US INTO HIS ROOM.

AND WE ALMOST NEVER GO INTO EVEN THE STORE-HOUSE ITSELF.

FURUKAWA! COME OUT HERE!

BANG BANG

YOU KILLED KIMIE!!

I REMEMBER MY BROTHER BEATING ON THE STOREROOM DOOR THAT NIGHT LIKE A MAN POSSESSED.

SHE WAS KILLED INSTANTLY.

KIMIE... KIMIE!

BUT...IT WASN'T ACTUALLY HIS FAULT. IT WAS JUST BAD LUCK.

IT'S BEEN EIGHT YEARS SINCE THEN.

IT'S HIS FAULT.

HE'S THE TYPE WHO RUNS WHEN THINGS GET UGLY. HE ONLY CAME SLINKING OUT THREE DAYS LATER BECAUSE HE WAS HUNGRY.

WHEN KIMIE DIED, HE CLOSED THE DOOR TO HIS ROOM AND AVOIDED US.

I'M NOT STOPPING NOW!

I'LL TAKE MY REVENGE ON HIM MY WHOLE LIFE.

AND ALL HE SAID WAS "PLEASE LET ME EAT."

HE DIDN'T CARE ABOUT KIMIE.

HOW MANY YEARS HAS IT BEEN? THE LAST ONE WAS AGES AGO.

TONIGHT'S THE FIREWORKS FESTIVAL, HUH?

A MONTH LATER ...

HE'LL BE SO SCARED.

...WE TELL HIM IT'S AN AIR RAID!

WHEN THE FIREWORKS GO OFF...

I HAD A FUN IDEA.

OKAY, IT'S SETTLED!

THAT'S PERFECT!

WE MAKE THE ROOT CELLAR IN THE YARD...

...LOOK LIKE A SHELTER AND SHOVE HIM IN THERE.

OH! THAT'S GOOD.

BUT ...

I'M USED TO IT. IT'S STRANGE, BUT NOW I FEEL MOST COMFORT-ABLE IN THE STORE-HOUSE.

LOCKED UP IN THAT GLOOMY STOREHOUSE ALL DAY FOR YEARS... I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU HAVEN'T GIVEN UP. OR MAYBE YOU'RE JUST THICK?

YOU'VE GOT SOME REAL MENTAL STRENGTH.

NOT JUST THE CITIES. THE COUNTRY'S GETTING IT BAD, TOO.

IN FACT, THERE'VE BEEN AIR RAIDS HERE AND THERE LATELY.

DREAMS SHOW US OUR HEARTS. BUT FURUKAWA, THE WAR DOESN'T LOOK LIKELY TO END SOON.

I DREAM SOMETIMES. JAPAN'S AT PEACE AND EVERYONE'S LIVING HAPPILY. I'M FREE, TOO, RUNNING AROUND HAVING FUN.

OH... SORRY. I KNOW ME OF ALL PEOPLE SHOULDN'T SAY THINGS LIKE THAT.

CAN'T LET OUR GUARD DOWN. WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED IF THEY CAME TONIGHT.

THAT'S BAD. I HOPE THEY DON'T COME HERE.

SO THEN... IS THIS TOWN IN TROUBLE, TOO?

OF COURSE. IT LOOKS LIKE THE AMERICAN COUNTERATTACK'S STARTED.

YOU HAVE TO AIR YOUR FUTON OUT SOMETIMES.

UH, UM, FURUKAWA. PLEASE LET ME CLEAN YOUR ROOM TONIGHT, FINALLY!

NO... IT'S OKAY.

ONE PERSON DIED.

SPEAKING OF... THERE WAS AN AIR RAID WAY OUT HERE ONCE BEFORE.

I'LL HANG KIMIE'S FUNERAL PORTRAIT IN FRONT OF HIS FACE TOMORROW!

DON'T WORRY, KIKUYO!

THANKS FOR SUPPER.

I BETTER GET BACK TO HIDING.

BOOM

CRACKLE CRACKLE CRACKLE

BOOM

FYOOOO

...

YUP!

ALL SET?

FURU-KAWA!

BOOM

MISSION START!

DO YOU WANT TO DIE?!

FURU-KAWA! COME OUT!

THE AMERICANS ARE ATTACKING!

FURUKAWA! COME ON! IT'S AN AIR RAID!

BOOM

BOOM

WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE!

FYOOOO

OPEN UP!

...

WEIRD. IS HE ASLEEP?

CAN'T YOU HEAR THEM? THAT NOISE!

IT'S A HUGE GROUP OF B-29s!

WE CAN'T STAY HERE!

BOOM

BOOM

KRRRK

WE'LL JUST HAVE TO BREAK THE DOOR DOWN. GET BACK.

HE'S SO SCARED, HE CAN'T EVEN MOVE.

BAM

BAM

AH!

STINKS OF MOLD...

NOOOO!

IDIOT! YOU CAN'T GO HANGING YOURSELF BECAUSE OF AN AIR RAID!

CRAP!

WHO IS THIS...?

W-
WHAT'S
...

FURU-
KAWA!

AAH!

IT'S A NOTE!

I FOUND THIS ON THE FLOOR!

"ADERA... FORGIVE ME... IT'S MY FAULT KIMIE DIED. I CAN ONLY APOLOGIZE BY DYING. SABURO FURUKAWA, MARCH 12, 1945."

WHAT ?!

TWO DAYS AFTER KIMIE DIED.

MARCH 12, 1945...?

WAIT... WHAT IS GOING ON?

FXOOO

HE DIED EIGHT YEARS AGO.

BOOM BOOM BOOM

WHAT WAS THAT THEN?

HE ATE SUPPER HERE EVERY DAY, WITH THAT DOLEFUL FACE...

WHAT ON EARTH ...

S-STOP THAT!

FURU-KAWA'S... GHOST...

BANG BANG

BANG BANG

OPEN UP NOW!

YES... COMING.

Y-YES, COM-ING.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN THERE?! OPEN UP!

OPEN UP! IT'S THE MILITARY POLICE!

PHEW!

UH, UM, OSHIMA.

SO? DOES IT SUIT ME?

TOOK YOU QUITE A WHILE, HM? WHAT WERE YOU DOING, THEN? YOU'RE NOT HIDING A DESERTER, ARE YOU?

KLAKKA

WE'VE GOTTEN A REPORT TONIGHT THAT SABURO FURUKAWA IS HERE!

DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME FIGHTING! COME OUT ALREADY!

AHEM!

NOW THEN.

BOOM

BOOM

FYOOO

HUH?

WHY NOT?

D- DON'T YELL.

HEY... OSHIMA.

FURU- KAWA...

WHY NOT? *HE'LL* HEAR YOU, THAT'S WHY NOT.

一日戦死

大東亜

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Junji Ito made his professional manga debut in 1987 and since then has gone on to be recognized as one of the greatest contemporary artists working in the horror genre. His titles include *Tomie* and *Uzumaki*, which have been adapted into live-action films; *Gyo*, which was adapted into an animated film; and his books *Fragments of Horror*, *Frankenstein*, *Lovesickness*, *No Longer Human*, *Remina*, *Shiver*, *Smashed*, and *Venus in the Blind Spot*, all of which are available from VIZ Media.

Ito's influences include classic horror manga artists Kazuo Umezz and Hideshi Hino, as well as authors Yasutaka Tsutsui and H.P. Lovecraft.

He is a three-time Eisner Award winner. In 2019 his collection *Frankenstein* won in the "Best Adaptation from Another Medium" category, and in 2021 he was awarded "Best Writer/Artist," while *Remina* received the award for "Best U.S. Edition of International Material (Asia)."

DESERTER

JUNJI ITO STORY COLLECTION

Story & Art by Junji Ito

Ito Junji Kessakushu 5: Dassouhei no iru ie
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PARENTAL ADVISORY
DESERTER is rated T+ for Older Teen and is recommended for ages 16 and up. This volume contains graphic violence and mature themes.

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